

BEADLE'S HALF DIME Library

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Vol. II.

Single
Number.

BEADLE AND ADAMS, PUBLISHERS,
No. 98 WILLIAM STREET, NEW YORK.

Price,
5 Cents.

No. 39.

Death-Face, THE DETECTIVE;

OR,
Life and Love in New York.

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"DOUBLE DAGGERS," "CLOVEN HOOF," "BUFFALO
BOY," "BOB WOOLF," "WILD IVAN," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRAGEDY IN CENTRAL PARK.

The last lingering rays of the golden sunset of an August day—a warm, sultry, breathless day in the great metropolis—were throwing a halo of shimmering light over the crowded park, with its throng of moving pedestrians and handsome carriages—its trees, flowering shrubs, beds of fragrant blossoming flowers, and sloping lawns, and over the pretty lake, dotted with row-boats filled with pleasure-seekers, and tiny white sails that looked picturesque and pretty as they danced across the waters, before a faint breeze that evening brought on—a breeze that had been lacking during the hot, parched, feverish day, within the narrow streets, and filthy courts of the great, bustling city.

They were all here in one realistic picture, these people of the city—the rich and the poor, the high and the low, and the good and the bad; come out to enjoy the sunset, the delicious breeze, and the exhilarating, romantic influences of the hour.

The rustic seats were full, the arbors and flower-covered bowers were all occupied, and the green carpet of grass strewn with idle loungers, some asleep, some reading, others gazing at and commenting on the passers-by.

And Cella Orwick, only a poor sewing-girl, to be sure, had come hither into this paradise of trees and flowers, and in a little vine-embowered arbor, unseen and safe from intrusion, where she could watch the lake, the drive and its gay equipages, and the incessant moving panorama of figures, was watching the dying glow upon the horizon, and waiting.

Waiting! Ah! the word was so inexpressibly long and meaning, it seemed to her, as the moments wore by, and the shadows gathered.

A pretty little thing was Cella, and men often paused to gaze back after her, as she passed along the street—not because she was gay, or flashing, or fascinating, nor because of her attire; but there was something attractive and pretty about her that created admiration and drew attention.

Only seventeen, yet old in education and intellectual growth beyond her years, and "finished" in a modest way that was prepossessing in itself, Petite but exceedingly

graceful of form, with a fair, sweet face—whiter than health would demand, perhaps—brown, sparkling eyes, and hair fine and soft and flowing, unconfined, to the tapering waist, and a carriage naturally regal.

Her dress was painfully plain and at contrast with her pretty self, simply a white muslin, relieved of its monotony by a bunch of red roses at the throat; and yet she looked sweetly beautiful in it and her little gipsy straw hat and dainty out-door slippers—looked divinely, thought one who was looking at her, unobserved, through one of the lattice windows.

He had been there just ten minutes, gazing at her, as she in turn watched the happy strollers, and happier scene, and admiration beamed from an eye that, though generally genial of expression, had power to flash with the fire of a strong and resolute will. Not a man yet was he, if you counted the years, for it wanted three months ere Dock Raymond attained his majority, but his athletic figure had all the graces of manhood, and in face he looked really older. A handsome face you would say, it was so round and good-natured, yet dissipation had left haunting traces there, and the eyes showed it

more than the other features. But if dress could add to one's personal appearance, it was not lacking in Dandy Dock, for his general make-up was decidedly bordering upon the "exquisite."

No sham goods were those he wore, nor were the rings upon his fingers or the diamond pin upon his immaculate shirt front anything but the pure stuff.

If Cella Orwick was conscious of the glances leveled at her, she was a skilled actress, for by no act or move did she betray the possession of such knowledge; indeed, she started violently at Dock's peculiar little laugh, and almost screamed when she looked around and beheld him standing upon the threshold.

"You, Mr. Raymond? How you frightened me! Were you standing there long?" she asked, her face a trifle more reddened than usual.

"Yes, Cele; have been standing out there, and gazing at you in raptures, for full ten minutes. Jove! you look sweet enough to eat, to-night; and to think of you coming here to enjoy what ain't allotted to poor mortals in this confounded city—a streak of sunshine. I'd quicker looked for you at the source of the Nile, in company with Stanley."

"No, I do not often get out this far," she replied, her gaze dropping to the floor, a pleased expression settling about her cherry lips. "It is a good way, and we can't always raise the car-fare, you know. Sister Nelly comes oftener than I."

"And that's because sister Nelly has got just a trifle more ambition than sister Cella," replied Dock, assuringly, coming forward to occupy the remaining portion of the seat.

"You are too much of a home-body for your own good, pet; don't give a fellow even a chance to see you."

"Why should you want to see me, Mr. Raymond? You know where we live."

"Yes, I know where, and used to drop in occasionally, but you remember another occupied my place, the last time I called."

"Yes," the girl assented, a pained expression shadowing her features. "I remember. It was Mr. —; but you do not know him, I guess."

"Luckily for him, no—luckily, because my fists are in a prime condition for a pugilistic encounter. You treated me rather cool that night, so I concluded I'd best take a scull, as the boys say."

"Oh! that is untrue, Mr. Raymond; I did not use you coolly!" Cella said, reproachfully. "You have always been too true a friend to me and Nelly, for that. I am sure I—"

And tears came into the pretty eyes that, in Dock Raymond's opinion, were incomparable.

"Of course you did, dear," he replied, soothingly, venturing to encircle her waist with his strong arm, and drawing her toward him—"of course you did. I was only teasing, that's all. I saw how matters were—that you had more smiles for the new bean than the old—and thought it my duty to resign. There, now, dry those tears or I shall be tempted to kiss them away."

"No, you mustn't—that



DEATH-FACE TRAPPED.

would not be right, you know, Ray," she said, putting her white hands over her face, as he made a feint at putting his threat into execution.

"And, does that fellow still visit you, Cele? Don't see what you admire in him, except it is his glib tongue, for he's sourer-looking than a pickled old maid."

Celia did not reply immediately. She was gazing away across the little sail-dotted expanse of water, and noting how fast the night-shades were gathering. Off yonder through the trees the first gleam of a gas-lamp shone like a twinkling star.

"He don't come any more," she finally replied. "I sent—"

"For him to meet you here, eh?" completed Dock, with a little laugh. "I thought something unusual brought you out. And perhaps he may even now be waiting for me to vacate?"

She did not answer, and he regarded her silence as a hint to go, and arose, with a sigh.

"Don't go, Ray—not just yet," she said, her voice low and trembling. "I will tell you when, and you needn't be offended."

"Neither I will, dearest," he said, reseating himself, and gathering her in his arms. "Cele! Cele! do you know how much I love you? Have you not seen all the while that my love is only for you?"

She trembled from head to foot, and he could feel the beating of her heart against his arm, but she did not try to release herself—only bowed her head upon his breast, and wept piteously. She did not reply, but he felt that he had an answer more assuring than words.

He held her there, while the night came striding on, softly caressing her soft hair, and waiting for—he hardly knew what. He only knew that it was bliss to be near her; that he loved her as he had never imagined he could love a woman.

She aroused at last, sat up, wiping away the tears that had reddened her eyes.

"You may go, now, Ray," she said, pressing the hand that held hers. "And, I want you to promise that you will not linger near, an eavesdropper."

He rose, after kissing her on the lips.

"You needn't fear, Cele," he replied, something of reproach in his tone. "I have got a matter to attend to in the Bowery, and it is time I was there. Don't stay here long. The people are beginning to leave already. I wish I could see you home."

"Not to-night, Ray, on his account. But, you may come and see me, some time. No one will be there in your way."

"And I will, bet high on that, Cele, you darling!" and then snatching a last kiss, he left the arbor, and hurried away toward the city, whose countless lights had all been lit.

Celia watched his handsome, stylish figure until it had disappeared among the throng; then she turned wearily around, as a footstep sounded, and a man stepped within the arbor.

A tall, graceful young fellow, attired in the height of fashion, and faultless in almost every particular as far as personal appearance was concerned. His face was darkly handsome in its well-chiseled features, and his eyes and jetty curling hair matched well with his complexion. But the expression about his mouth was more cruel and sensual than pleasing. Diamonds were liberally worn upon his shirt-front and fingers, and the chain across his pure white vest was of heavy gold.

Celia saw him, and he came forward, an angry gleam in his dark eyes.

"So you are alone, at last, eh?" he said, half-sarcastically. "I've been waiting half an hour or more for that puppy to leave."

"You came too early," Celia answered, calmly. "I said at dusk, in my note."

"Yes, and that was a pretty note, too, wasn't it? I gave you credit for more sense. If that note had by any mischance been lost, and its contents got abroad, I should have been ruined!"

"Indeed!" Celia had changed wonderfully in this man's presence. She was cold, calm and collected. She knew she was facing a tiger, and must be equally brave. "You were warned, once before, in less emphatic words of the impending trouble, and paid no heed. When last I wrote, I wanted to make my self understood, Ned St. Cloud!"

"Curse it, you are growing impudent. I did not come, because I had important business on hand," replied the man, digging into the floor of the arbor with the heel of his patent-leather boot. "And now that I am here, what do you want?"

It was several moments before he was answered; then the reply came in words of weight—in the cool, measured tones of the desperate girl.

"You should know, well enough, Ned, without asking me—you do know, and are trembling on the verge of ruin, where one word of mine will place you. You must marry me to-night!"

He started to his feet, with a fierce oath, then re-seated himself opposite her again.

"You are a fool, girl," he said, haughtily. "You think I fear you, and that you can tyrannize over me, but you will find to your cost that I am not to be brow-beaten. I told you I could not marry you at present, and you could not let that suffice, but must send me an insulting letter."

"Insulting!" Celia laughed, scornfully. "No one can insult a man of your cloth, Ned St. Cloud. It is impossible. True, you told me you would marry and acknowledge me, some time, but I cannot wait—cannot, I say; more, will not. Oh! how I hate, loathe and despise you, and yet you must marry me—at once—to-night, or, as God is my judge, I'll—"

"What?" he asked, coolly, though there was a frightened look in his eyes. "What?"

"I'll make you marry me—I'll go to your father—I'll advertise you through all the social circles of New York, as a black-hearted scoundrel!"

"And get laughed at for your pains!"

"No! I'll not get laughed at, either, you villain, but I'll make you such an object of attention, that you'll be glad to hide your face in the lowest haunts of the city."

"There! there!" he gasped, "be quiet, for I take it all back. But I cannot marry you—not yet."

"You must—you shall; this very night, or go to the magistrate in the morning, whichever you will."

"I'll do neither. You shall not divulge a word concerning our relations, and I swear it, you she-tigress!"

He had stepped nearer, his eyes gleaming with fury, and they stood face to face, the wronged girl, and the man who had been her worst enemy.

"Marry me, to-night, or every one of your friends and acquaintances shall—"

She did not finish—she could not, for, like a panther, he was upon her, his two hands around her throat in a terrible grasp. With the ferocity of a madman he held her, his gripe never relaxing until he was satisfied the foul work was done. And when he put her back upon the rustic bench the heart of Celia Orwick had ceased to beat.

"Dead, by heaven!" he gasped, looking askance at the purple face and throat.

Then, with a shudder, he turned and stealthily made his way out of the dark arbor, joining in with the great crowd.

Half an hour later he emerged from the park on Fifth avenue, and hailing a cab, sprang in, and was whirled rapidly away.

CHAPTER II.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. HEIDLE.

The day following St. Cloud's murderous assault, was but a counterpart of its predecessor. The sun poured down upon the metropolis its intense heat, and not a breath of air was stirring. Everything seemed withered and burnt by the scorching rays; the sidewalks and pavements were blazing with heat; even the flies in the filthy gutters of Baxter street seemed drooping and listless from the arid influence of the sun.

Of course the wagons and cars ran the same, and the Broadway bus drivers cracked their lashes and swore with accustomed dignity, but the number of pedestrians abroad was noticeably less than at cooler periods of the season.

All whom important business did not urge out were pretty sure to make the best of their shelter, while those unlucky ones who were perforce driven out, took the shady side of the street, and their leisure to perform their duties.

At noon, when the heat was about the greatest, a young gentleman might have been seen hurrying along Baxter street, in defiance of the wilting power of the sun. At nearly every other saloon where cooling beverage was dispensed, he stepped in, and each time on his return to the burning street, appeared somewhat refreshed.

He was tall, strong-limbed, and otherwise well proportioned, and attired in the dress-suit of a West Point cadet, which well displayed his figure. In face he was tolerably good-looking, though his cheeks were bloated a trifle, and dissipation had left marks about his eyes, which were of a lusterless gray color. His hair, of a light brown hue, was sheared close to his skull, and a light mustache on his lip was carefully waxed to a needle's point at the ends. Altogether his make-up was elaborate, and called forth many glances through half-closed shutters as he passed along.

Without looking around him in either direction, he hurried along, and at last paused in front of a two-story brick structure, on the left-hand side of the street, going up. The place had from the smell evidently received a fresh coat of paint; and as the blinds and door were tightly closed, one might have supposed the building empty, but for a painted tin sign upon the window ledge, bearing the inscription:

"DR. J. C. HEIDLE."

In large, showy letters.

"This is the place, I believe," muttered the cadet, advancing up the steps, and pulling the bell, vigorously. "I wonder if the old curmudgeon receives patients at this hour?"

In answer to the ring, a colored youth appeared at the door, and stared curiously at the uniform of the caller.

"Lord! you isn't a p'lice officer am you?" was the question put, and the whites of the boy's eyes showed wildly.

"No, you fool," replied the cadet, curtly. "Is your master in?"

"No, sar; he has stepped out," responded the youth, in all truth.

"Go tell him a gentleman has called who has a case of vital importance, wherein there is a good speck. Do you understand, you rascal?"

The boy nodded, and closing and locking the inner hall door after him, went on his errand. He soon returned, however, and admitted the cadet into a large, elaborately-frescoed hall, whose tiled floor was laid with brilliant plush rugs, and walls hung with pictures, more noticeable for their striking subjects than for their modesty. And the same might be applied fitly to a number of richly-attired young women who were lounging about in a great saloon parlor, through which the cadet was conducted, some reading, and others puffing their perfumed cigarettes.

In the second story front the learned doctor was presented to the cadet, who, without ado, accepted a seat and lit a cigar.

The doctor was a short man, whose age was probably bordered upon fifty, with a round little face, evil in its expression, peculiarly glittering little black eyes, and long curling hair, which touched his shoulders.

He was painfully large of girth, and made an odd figure when settled down in his huge arm-chair.

He received the cadet with an inquiring nod, and then gave some order to the colored youth, in a low tone, after which the boy hurried out.

"You have important business with me, my friend, I believe," he said, with a slight German accent.

"Yes, I have," was the reply, "if you are the Dr. Heidle whom I seek—the same who has a private asylum for insane people in—"

"No matter just where, please. Yes, I am the same man. What shall I call you, my friend?"

"Ainsworth, for the present—Clifford Ainsworth."

"Very good, Mister Ainsworth, very good. And now what can I do for you?"

The cadet glanced cautiously around, as if apprehending eavesdroppers.

"Oh! you need not be afraid to speak out!" the doctor hastened to say, with a shrug of his shoulders. "These walls have all been recently padded. I could murder you, and your screams would never be heard."

"In that case I shall feel easier," Ainsworth replied, with a smile. "My business is secret, in so far that it would be my death-warrant to let my little plan get abroad. I understand, sir, that you receive patients in your private asylum, for a moderate remuneration per annum. Is this so, or have I been misinformed?"

"Oh! yes, I occasionally receive patients—quite often, in fact. The institution is under my personal supervision, and patients receive the best of care and attention."

"So I have heard. And I have also been informed that you do not require a person to be really insane, to insure an entry into your place, and that after lost within those prison walls, there is no hope for their ever escaping without a permit from you, for the keeper."

The doctor tipped back in his arm-chair, and gazed at his visitor keenly.

"Have you got any one you wish put in the asylum, never to come out until you say so, or cease to pay the bill?" he demanded, stroking his smooth-shaven chin, calmly. "Or are you endeavoring to learn what you can so that you can put it to other uses—for instance, to make up a police report?"

"Not the latter, certainly, but the former, possibly, if we can come to satisfactory terms. Now, then, I suppose what I say is in strictest confidence with you. It must go no further."

"No need to fear me," returned the doctor. "Any of those with whom I have had dealings will vouch for my responsibility."

"Very well. My case is this: Between two of us—myself and a female cousin—there is a matter of a million dollars pending. The sum total was left to my cousin, while I, being a wild oat in the field, came in with only an allowance of a home with my cousin, if I chose to accept of it, and five hundred a year for pocket change. But, in case my cousin and I should marry, two-thirds of the money returns to me."

"Ah, yes, I perceive. Why not use other means, then, than the asylum? I can fix you up a powder, which could be easily slipped into her tea, and I will defy the sharpest chemist to discover a trace of poison after the work is done. It is sure, safe and quick!"

Ainsworth shook his head, with a shudder, at the proposition.

"No! I want no murder on my hands," he said, decidedly. "Besides, it is imperative that she shall live. For, in case of her death, I only get half of the legacy. It was my uncle's fond desire to see us two men and wife, but death snatched him off, suddenly, and so he left us situated as I have illustrated. Now, my cousin hates me in the most approved fashion, and no inducement of a mild nature will get me so ingratiated that an early marriage will be the result. Therefore, it behooves me to adopt harsher measures. If I can imprison her for a time, perhaps she will marry me; or, if she will not, I can then have her put out of existence, and live on the half a million."

"Exactly. And, saying you receive but the half, where will the remaining half go to, sir?"

"To various public benevolent institutions throughout the country—a large share to the poor."

"Very well. Your plans seem about your only hope, young man. Bring the girl to me—or, still better, I will see to her removal—and she shall receive safe quarters, and you need never fear that she will intrude upon you, so long as you pay the annual fee for her confinement."

"And that will be?"

"Four thousand dollars, if you please, invariably in advance."

"What? Are you crazy, man?" the astounded cadet demanded, starting up. "Four thousand dollars?"

"Precisely, sir, and you needn't accept the offer at that figure, unless you choose to do so, as I am not anxious to get patients of your kind."

"But, heavens! that is beyond the bounds of reason, even. I had not thought to pay over as many hundred."

The doctor laughed, coolly, and drummed on the table with his fingers, evidently enjoying the other's discomfort.

"You can find cheaper institutions in the city, no doubt," he remarked, pouring out a glass of Rhine wine, and swallowing it at a gulp. "There is Dr. Barker's 'Home'—charges only about eight hundred; or Sedon's 'Retreat,' at a thousand; but both places were gutted by the authorities, last year, and are even now under police surveillance. My place is so private that no one even suspects that it is more

than a residence, and its prominent location on the avenue, shields it from suspicion. It is absolutely safe, and I can cheerfully recommend it. Or, if you wish to go out of town—"

"No, I do not wish to leave New York, if there is help for it," replied Ainsworth. "But you can afford to knock off a couple of thousand, doctor."

"No, indeed. My fee is small enough at five, considering the risk I am running. Blackwell's Island has no potent charms for me."

"Well, I suppose if those are your figures, you will have to take the job, for two thousand down in cash, and a check on the Third National. Will that be satisfactory?"

"Not at all. I must have all cash. Checks do not answer my purpose."

With a muttered execration, Ainsworth took a huge wallet from an inside pocket, and counted out a stack of bills upon the table, some of which were fresh, crisp ones, while others were older and more worn.

The "young" ones Dr. Heidle counted out from the older, and handed back to the cadet, with a cool, calculating smile, that spoke volumes.

"If you have any more of those of a maturer age, I should prefer them," he said, with keen sarcasm.

"Why? what's the matter with these new ones?" demanded the plottor, an angry flush dyeing his face.

"Nothing much, only I don't handle the 'queer' ones," was the reply, in significant tones. "You should have known better than to try any games on me, young man. Supposing I had taken those cleverly executed counterfeits, and after I had caged your bird, some of them had come back on me? As a result I should have gone to prison, and you may rely upon it I should not have gone alone!"

"You have a sharp eye to detect what thousands are daily failing to detect!" replied Ainsworth, with a shrug. "It is seldom one of those bills are pronounced bad."

"I recognized them immediately, because I was once in the business!" was the old villain's announcement. "One more fifty, please—there, that is all correct, I believe. And, now, about the patient: Where does she live?"

"At No. — Fifth avenue."

"Ugh! that is bad. Most any other street would be better for my purpose. Does she go out much?"

"Not this weather. It is too sultry. You must act before next Tuesday, as that is the day appointed for her departure for Newport."

"Hum, yes! Has she any particular female friends?"

"A few, I believe. Amy Chyle is a very intimate acquaintance. Resides at No. — 38th street. Also Miss Lulu Marolin, at No. — 27th street."

"Ah! yes." The doctor jotted down the addresses upon a piece of paper.

"Her name is—?"

"Amy Elwood."

"And your correct name—?"

"I cannot give. I am to remain incog."

"Oh! no. You cannot do that, young man, and leave the girl with me."

"But I will not give my real name. It is dangerous."

"And equally dangerous for me to undertake your case, without your full name and address. Suppose I should get warning that the cops were about to make a descent upon my asylum. I should immediately want to rid myself of incumbrances. And, then, what would I do, in case I was ignorant of your name?"

"Well—" Ainsworth reflected a few moments, a dark scowl upon his face—"I suppose you'll have to have it."

He took the doctor's pencil, and wrote a name and address upon a sheet of paper. Heidle took it and put it in his wallet, with a nod.

"I shall inquire at the address if such a party resides there," he said, manifesting his disposition of cunning. "If not, I shall do nothing in the matter, and you will forfeit your money. It is always the best to be on the safe side, you know."

"Oh! yes; certainly. And, now, if our bargain is completed, I will go."

"Very well. But, one thing more—has this young lady any favored lovers—such ones as would be apt to create a disturbance if she turns up missing? You should look well to this."

"None, I believe, except it is a young fellow, whom she occasionally receives, by the name of Harry Conroy. I doubt if he is in town, now, however."

"All right. Wait, young man," and the doctor touched a silver bell. "We will drink to our mutual success!"

The negro boy re-entered, and deposited a silver salver with decanter and glasses upon the table.

After drinking several glasses of stiff old brandy, Cadet Ainsworth left the house, feeling rather glorious, and made his way out of Baxter street. Half an hour later he was upon Broadway, mingling with the crowd, that, despite the parching heat, were promenading; and there was an exultant smile upon his face, which boded no good to poor Amy Elwood, the victim of as diabolical a plot as man often conceives.

"If it works!" he muttered, under his breath, his eyes gleaming—"if it only works, you can consider yourself made, old boy!"

CHAPTER III. A VILLAINOUS ACT.

The home of Amy Elwood was located upon Fifth avenue, in one of the hundreds of grand, imposing residences, which line that noted thoroughfare.

It was a large, pretentious structure, set in a pretty shrub-fringed lawn, where beds of rare flowers were in blossom. It was a lovely place, even for the

aristocratic avenue, and one might well envy the fair heiress her possessions.

Inside, the house was furnished richly and luxuriously throughout, and superior taste was displayed in the arrangement of everything.

On the morning following the day of Cadet Ainsworth's visit to Doctor Heidle in Baxter street, two persons were seated by the open window of the crimson drawing-room, one smoking and gazing out upon the avenue, while the other, a young girl of not over eighteen years, was looking over the columns of the morning Herald.

A fair, pretty picture she made, in her loose-fitting wrapper, with a tie of lace and ribbons at the throat. A fair, glorious girl was Amy Elwood, the young heiress of old John Kent's countless thousands.

Rather slight, but yet exceedingly graceful of build, she was possessed of a pleasing figure, womanly and symmetrical in all its contours, and a face of purely chiseled features, set off with a soft cream-tinted complexion, which matched harmoniously with her expressive blue eyes, her rosebud lips, and fine blonde hair, which the faint breeze blowing in through the open glass door, tossed in confusion about her shoulders.

A gloriously beautiful woman or girl she was, and so evidently thought her male companion, a handsome, dandyish fellow, who alternated his glances between her and the end of his freshly-fired Havana, while she pored over the news, intently.

"Anything of importance, sis?" he asked, watching her with a vacant, dreamy expression. "Any returns from the regattas or the races at the park?"

"None, Clarence," was the reply, without raising her eyes from the page. "There has been another terrible drowning case at Long Branch, however."

"Has, eh? Well, for my part, I should not marvel to hear that all these reckless bathers were drowned."

"But, I am not reckless, Clarence. Indeed, they called me the most expert lady bather at Cape May, last season."

"Because the report had got abroad that you were an heiress—a millionairess, rather; because you had a pretty face and the capital to back it, no doubt," with a perceptible shrug.

"You seem to envy me my good looks, Mr. Seymour, and the fortune that uncle left me," she said, looking straight at him with her big blue eyes. "I am sure—"

"I envy you nothing, dear cousin," the young man replied, flinging away his cigar, and bending toward her, a touch of passion in his voice, "except it be your heart and hand. Oh! Amy, you know how truly my heart is yours—how I love—ay, worship you; why, then, will you not give me some little encouragement? tell me that I may have a little hope?"

"Because, Clarence, I do not love you, and never can be your wife," Amy answered, candidly. "I have told you the same many times before, but you still will persist in your unwelcome declarations of love. Once, and for all, I say I cannot—will not marry you, so please let that settle it. As a cousin, I respect you, but no more."

"You love another?" he growled, biting fiercely at his mustache—"I know you do, so you need make no denial. That blush upon your cheek tells more than all else. And it is that poor shabby fellow who once stopped your runaway horses. I heard of that little affair, and know that he called on you, and that you gave him encouragement to come again and again, which he has done. And it is going to end that you, an heiress to a million of dollars, good-looking, healthy and intelligent, are going to link your fortunes with a poor, ignorant, uneducated pauper!"

A hot, indignant flush was burning upon Amy's cheeks, when Seymour had finished.

"You speak untruthfully, sir," she said, controlling herself by a determined effort. "Mr. Conroy is a thorough gentleman, as intelligent as yourself, and, neither does he dress shabbily, nor is he in the distressed circumstances you would like me to believe. I have not a doubt but what, to-day, he could raise more money than you."

"Maybe!" Seymour assented, with a sneer. "But, at least, I am considered a gentleman in our best social circles, and he is a—"

"What? tell me what he is, less than a gentleman, sir!" Amy cried, springing from her seat, her fair face white, her eyes blazing with anger.

"I will tell you, dear cousin, so that you may keep your pretty foot out of the fire. Harry Conroy is—well, he's a porter, and occasionally carries in coal! A good honest occupation, no doubt, but hardly to my liking."

"No; you would sooner play gentleman loafer, and live upon your friends, than do an honest stroke of labor!" flashed back the angry heiress. "Besides, Mr. Conroy is engaged in no such work, I am positive."

"Oh! you are positive, eh? You have questioned him as to his occupation, probably."

"I did, but—"

"He didn't tell you? No, I shouldn't, if I were he. Ha! ha! you disbelieve me, I see. Well, all you have to do, is to ride through Third and Fourth avenues every day for a week, and I'll guarantee you will see your Adonis blacked up with coal-smut, like one of Bryant's end-men, and working like a beaver."

Amy did not reply, for the thoughts aroused by Seymour's declaration were strangely painful.

This Harry Conroy had once upon a time stopped her runaway horses when they were dashing through Broadway at a furious rate of speed, and she had thanked him and given him her card, for at a glance she was favorably impressed with his pale, intellectual face.

He called upon her, and she became more interested in him during his short stay than she had ever be-

fore been in men, and as a result, extended him an invitation to call again. And he had made several calls, which were mutually pleasant, and though no word of love had passed between them, Amy was conscious that she loved the young fellow with the whole of her young heart, and she guessed that he was as much in love as herself. But, he had not now called for two weeks, which seemed an endless time to the waiting girl.

And although she believed what Seymour had said to be a base fabrication, she naturally could not help thinking of it.

For she had once asked Harry what was his occupation, and he had dextrously evaded a reply, which, now that she recalled the fact, looked strange, if not suspicious. Who or what was he? This was the question now!

A ring at the door interrupted her thoughts, and Seymour went to answer the summons, motioning the servant back. A glow of satisfaction gleamed in his eye, as he opened the door, and received a delicately-enveloped note from a messenger-boy, who retired as soon as he had done his errand.

"What is it, Clarence?" Amy asked, looking up as he re-entered the drawing-room with the letter.

"Something for you, cousin. A boy brought it," and he tossed the note upon her lap. "Doubtless it is from your hot-carrier Adonis."

"Mr. Seymour, I wish you to cease your insulting comments upon Mr. Conroy, or else leave the room. I will not be annoyed any longer!" Amy cried, indignantly.

"Oh! I touched a tender spot, eh? Well, I won't offend again, 'pon honor," and lighting a fresh cigar, the cousin strolled out upon the lawn, while Amy hastily tore open the letter and ran over the contents.

It read:

"NEW YORK, August 12, 187—.

"DEAR MISS ELWOOD:

"Your intimate friend, Amy Chyle, is lying dangerously ill at No. — 3d avenue, and is calling for you. Please come; we send a carriage for you."

Truly, J. C. H.

Tears were in Amy's eyes as she finished, and Seymour, sauntering back into the room from the lawn, saw them.

"Hello! what's the matter, sis? Bad news? And, by the way, there is a carriage waiting outside. Whose is it?"

Amy explained in a few words, and then ran upstairs for her wraps, returning shortly after, attired in a rich morning street costume, and looking so sweet and pretty, that the heart of Clarence Seymour—the bogus Cadet Ainsworth—smote him, when he realized that she was about entering into a trap which was to spring upon her and consign her to a living tomb, within the walls of a private mad-house.

"You may call around for me at tea time, Clarence, and if possible I will come home," Amy said, as she allowed him to put her into the awaiting coach.

"Very well, sis. Good-by to you!" and he shut the door, and the cab rolled away over the jolting cobble-stones.

"So goes one obstacle from my path!" muttered the arch-villain, as he returned to the mansion. "This is all mine, now—for a time, at least, and I mean to enjoy it in the best sense of the word, while my defiant little cousin languishes in what is worse than a grave or prison."

Amy was driven rapidly away, and in the course of half an hour the cab let her out in front of an imposing marble-front structure, with massive spiral steps ascending from the pave, to the heavy, silver-trimmed doors.

With no suspicion of the diabolical schemes of which she was the victim, she ran up the steps, and sounded the ponderous knocker.

A young girl of about her own age, evidently a Creole, judging from her features and complexion, answered the summons.

"I came to see Miss Chyle," Amy said, upon an inquiring glance from the servant. "Can I see her?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied the girl, with a courtesy. "Come in, please."

And Amy was ushered into a grand hall, and then into a parlor which was so grand, that involuntarily she gave a stare of amazement.

The marble-tiled floor shone like a mirror, where it was not laid with plush and velvet mats; the richly-frescoed walls were inlaid with costly framed paintings of the old masters; brilliant chandeliers pended from the high, molded ceilings, and the furniture was of the richest and most expensive pattern.

The great windows were guarded by costly damask curtains; statues under vail stood here and there, and a grand piano occupied one corner. Altogether it was too grand for a residence, and Amy gazed around her in wonder and inquiry.

"You will please be seated, ma'am," the servant said, "and I will call the doctor."

Amy sunk down upon a sofa and waited while the Creole hurried away. A few moments later, Doctor Heidle entered, his fat face wearing a smile of welcome.

"Good-morning, Miss Elwood," he said, suavely; "happy to meet you, but most sorry to say that Miss Chyle is no better. Would you like to see her?"

"Oh, yes," replied Amy, quickly, springing to her feet. "We are very dear friends. Take me to her, sir."

The doctor bowed, and led the way into the hall and then up the hall to a small room, where an elevator was waiting for them. Into this they stepped, and were borne rapidly upward, finally coming to a stop in the third story.

Here Doctor Heidle assisted Amy out, a low laugh breaking from his lips.

"Pretty well done, miss," he said; "I apprehended more trouble."

"Sir?" Amy interrogated, not understanding.

"Pretty well done, I say," repeated the doctor, with another laugh; "the ease with which I caged you. Ha! ha!"

"Caged me?" A great horror seized upon the young heiress at those two words. "Caged me? What do you mean?"

"I mean that I never had less trouble in entrapping a victim. Young woman, you may as well know the worst at once. You are safely imprisoned in Doctor Heidle's private mad-house, where you are liable to remain for life."

Then, without waiting to note the effect of his words, the old wretch leaped into the car, pulled a cord, and descended rapidly downward.

No words can describe the horror—the awful sensation that swept over Amy Elwood at this moment. She uttered a low, terrified cry, and sunk unconscious on the floor! Poor girl!

Little she knew of the crime and wickedness in a great city like New York.

After hours of insensibility, she awoke to find herself in a large but neatly-furnished room, lying upon a couch, with several females bending anxiously over her.

"Where am I?" she gasped, starting up; and then flashed across her mind the doctor's words, "Oh! great God! I am in a mad-house!"

"Yes, young lady," replied one of the females, "you are indeed in a mad-house—a so-called mad-house, but no persons whose sanity is questioned, ever come here. It is a living tomb—a jail wherein poor defenseless women are kept, by a foul wretch who calls himself a doctor."

"And, you—who are you all?" Amy demanded, suspiciously, for she saw girls around her from her own age upward to old gray-haired women.

"Alas, dear, we are the same as you—prisoners. I was the last to come, and my name is Etta Allanton. There are women here who have spent years of their life in this third-story prison."

This much Amy learned, and with a groan she sat upon the cot, and gazed hopelessly around into the strange collection of faces about her—faces that this horrible life had furrowed and wrinkled deeply.

And as if to cap the climax of her misery, a door opened, and with a demoniacal smile of triumph upon his face, Clarence Seymour entered the room!

CHAPTER IV.

DEATH-FACE, THE DETECTIVE.

GOING along Mulberry street for several blocks, and reading the door and window-ledge signs, you would, at the time of our story, and will now, doubtless, come to a large unprepossessing tenement of brick, in which not less than twenty or more families were crowded, and a large banner sign over the main door, respectfully announced to the public that this was "Molly's Crib." Why it was called so, or who the individual Molly was, we shall not stop to learn, but, after passing up several flights of stairs, and along hallways where filthy, half-nude children were playing marbles, we at last enter a room in the further corner of the fifth story.

Inside we find quite a change from the unpleasant scene we have just passed through. The apartment is rudely but comfortably furnished, with common Ingrain carpet, wooden chairs, and three couches which evidently served as beds for the three men lounging upon them, smoking their long Turkish pipes.

They were three as unlike, as one will often meet in company—unlike in personal appearance and dress, if not in disposition, tastes and callings.

First of all, and most noticeable of all was Death-Face, the Detective. It would require considerable explanation to enlighten the reader as to how he came into possession of that title, and therefore we will let the name suffice in itself. Death-Face is too well known in the detective annals, for us to be strictly personal. Yet we propose to write of him, in this romance, as though he were a character of imagination and fiction.

He was a man of five-and-twenty years, then; tall and compactly built, with wiry, supple limbs, and swelling muscles, and people who knew, declared him to be the strongest, quickest man of his weight in the metropolis, which might seem rather a boastful assertion, when the men about our wharves and markets are considered—men whose feats of strength are often astonishing.

In face the young detective was a study, if you were desirous of taking in all the minute points, for he was not a man easily read; long acquaintance was the only thing calculated to give you a safe idea of the man. Perhaps it was from his face that he derived his name; at least his countenance was white as though death had laid its stamp there.

It was not an unearthly paleness, but a natural deathly white, reminding one more of a dead face than of anything else. Some hinted at paint, and others at consumption, but Death-Face shook his head with a grim smile, meant to imply that they were in the wrong. His eyes were black and piercing, and his hair of a like shade, and, while he wore no beard, his garments were of a gray color harmonizing with the deathly pallor of his face.

By temperament he was habitually silent and impassive. Unless he chose to reply, all questioning was useless, for he would not make any sort of an answer until the spirit moved him, when he was as glib of tongue as anybody. And, as a detective, Death-Face was an expert, and second to none upon the metropolitan force.

Of his two companions, one we have seen before—

the same Dandy Dock whom we saw in the Central Park, the evening of the murder of poor Celia Orwick. But there is less of elegance in his make-up, now, and a more dissipated look about his eyes. The third was a young man of one-and-twenty, slight of build, and tolerably fair looking in the face.

He had spent three years as a comedian upon the Bowery stage, acting principally a foolish character, at which, by the way, he was up in his line, and this had earned him the sobriquet of Fooly Fred, by which he was widely known. Both he and Dandy Dock had enlisted in the service of Death-Face over a year previous, and had proven themselves apt scholars in the profession.

It was known among a few that Dock was in the detective service, but not generally, and in disguise he had been able to penetrate everywhere almost without fear of detection.

Fooly Fred was unsuspected, and by some believed to be really foolish, which admitted him into some of the lowest haunts of the city. All three had disguises unknown to the other, unless they wished to be known, when there were well arranged signals to be given, by which one could be apprised of the other's presence.

Death-Face was here, there, and everywhere; there was no telling one moment where he would be the next, and his disguises were so many and perfect, that the villainous element of the great city had grown to dread the mention of his name.

And thus we introduce him and his aids to the public.

Death-Face was in a communicative mood, today, for him, and while he puffed thoughtfully at his pipe, he would occasionally put in a word.

"Did you hear about that missing girl?" questioned Fooly Fred, watching the clouds of smoke dissolve into bluish atmosphere.

"No! what girl?" demanded Dock, from his corner. "Another Ross case?"

"Well, something similar, I reckon. Saw an advertisement in the morning *Herald*; some gal wanted to know where her sister was. Left her home to go to Central Park, last week, Friday, and hasn't come back yet. Foul play suspected."

"Any reward?" asked Death-Face, stretching himself, with a yawn.

"No; seems there were only the two sisters—took in sewing for a living, as near as I can learn. Poor as church mice, and if any one will kindly tell me of the whereabouts of my sister, I shall be very grateful."

"Ah!" Dock twisted his face into a wry expression. "A 'gratitude' case, eh? Well, I am not taking on any such to-day."

It might be a good move, old boy. Maybe this sister that advertises is handsome and courtable."

"Hang the women!" replied Dock, in evident disgust; "they're all alike. The only female I ever cared for gave me the 'shake,' and I haven't much faith in them. I've got something better in view."

"What?" asked Death-Face, calmly.

"Oh! something up on Twenty-seventh street, in a 'brown-stone.'"

"Faro or counterfeiting?"

"The former, I suspect."

"Humph! you'll not get in there. This lost girl business weighs better to the pound, in my way of thinking."

"Well, you can tackle it, if you choose, but you'll find the difference."

"Any news of this great counterfeiting scheme?" asked Fooly Fred, relighting his pipe.

"No!" replied Death-Face, with a scowl. "It is indeed a big case to handle, with no handles to it. I've done some of my most scientific scouting, and Pinkerton's men are on the watch, constantly, but all to no avail. The game is safely quarried, and the country is being flooded with the most cleverly-executed counterfeiters of the age. Not less than five thousand dollars' worth of the stuff was afloat on the market yesterday. I'll wager money against reputation, that one man out of every ten, in Wall street, cannot distinguish the new true fifties from these 'blossoms' the 'ring' is shoving."

"Probably not; and this establishment must be one of the most complete in the world, for, instead of playing upon one bank, they have sets of dies for at least fifty, throughout the United States, I hear," said Dandy Dock.

"Yes, there is where the mischief is. If they only 'blossomed' on one or two banks, the public could watch out for them, but bills of all banks pouring in to market are decidedly puzzling. Besides, they have a process for making new counterfeiters look old and dilapidated, which is ingenious, and helps to prevent suspicion in many cases."

"Do you think the den is in this city?"

"Undoubtedly, as there is a greater influx of counterfeiters here than in Philadelphia or Boston. In my opinion, many of our first citizens are implicated in this movement, and if the ring is ever broken up, there will be some startling discoveries."

"You'd be surprised to find a Mayor and a Congressman in it," said Fred, with a laugh.

"No fear of that; but there are some gambling politicians in New York, who need watching more than their bolder brother rogues."

At this juncture the conversation of the three detectives was interrupted by a knock at the door of their room.

A dainty, hesitating sort of a knock it was—feminine, at a guess. And so it proved, when Dandy Dock went to answer the summons. A little womanish figure, neatly attired, and deeply veiled, stood in the hallway, outside, looking so odd, that Dock whistled under his breath. He did not remember of ever having seen her before.

"Is the detective, Death-Face, in?" was asked in a low sweet voice, and then the woman gave a

start as she looked up into the face of Dock. She recognized him, even though he could not her, on account of the veil.

"Yes, ma'am, the boss is in; will you step inside?" and in his suave manner, Dock handed her a seat near the door. "Death-Face, this lady wishes to see you—eh? madam?"

"Yes, sir," was the faint reply.

"To see me, did you say?" yawned the detective, rising to his feet and bowing courteously. "Ah! yes; what can I do for you, lady?"

The woman hesitated a moment, evidently confused at finding herself alone with so many men; but at last she threw back her veil to give her freedom of speech. Dock uttered an exclamation of surprise, and sprung forward.

"Miss Nelly Orwick!" he cried, extending his hand; "is it you?"

"Yes, it is I, Mr. Raymond," replied the sweet-faced little woman, shaking hands, cordially. "I expect our surprise is mutual, for I did not expect to find you here."

She was a little thing, this Nelly Orwick, with a model, *petite* form, a fresh sweet face, and blue eyes, and hair of a chestnut shade—a woman whom it is deucedly hard to see and converse with without admiring; a gay, fascinating little butterfly, seemingly made to bring sunshine and enchantment into the world. At least, her appearance created favor in the mind of one of the detectives, and that one was Fooly Fred.

"And I am as delighted to see you as I am surprised, Miss Nelly!" Dock replied. "How did you leave the piquant Celia?"

Dock Raymond wished he had not asked, when, the next moment, Nelly burst into sobs, and wept bitterly.

"Oh! Dock!" she cried, piteously, "Celia is gone! I have not seen her for nearly a week!"

"Gone!" Dock's face whitened a little, as he heard—"gone, did you say?"

"Oh! yes, gone, and I do not know where she is. Oh! my poor darling sister! she is dead, and I cannot see her."

"Celia gone! By heaven, this is news to me, Nelly. When did she go—where—how? Explain, for God's sake!"

Dock was greatly agitated.

"Oh! Dock, she started for the park one day last week—Friday afternoon, and she has not come back. Oh! my poor, sweet sister! Oh! what shall I do?"

"Calm yourself, Miss Orwick," said Death-Face, approaching the weeping girl, respectfully, "and we will look into the case. Fred, this must be what you mentioned of seeing in the *Herald*!"

"Oh! yes, I advertised in the *Herald*—I have done everything," moaned Nelly, sobbing the harder. "I have spent every cent we had saved up for our rent, and cannot find her."

"I can throw a little light upon the matter," said Dock, slowly. "I met Celia in the park, on Friday evening at dusk. She was sitting in an arbor, waiting for some one. I questioned her, and found out that she had an appointment to meet the fellow who was at your house, the last evening I called. Then I came away."

"Oh! the poor, misguided girl. She went to meet St. Cloud, then? I would not let him visit her any more, and she promised me not to see him."

"Who is this St. Cloud?" demanded Death-Face, who, in short-hand cipher, had been jotting down the conversation upon a sheet of foolscap.

"He is a young man of dark complexion, hair and mustache; somewhat dressy, and the son of a Wall street broker."

"Ah! is that so? Do you think he would have married her, she being beneath him in station?"

"No! he promised to marry her, and got her into trouble, and I told him that unless he kept his promise, he must stay away. Then he got angry, and came no more."

"Ah! little by little we are getting light upon the case," Death-Face said, eagerly. "Did your sister love this St. Cloud?"

"No! she was fascinated by his fine dress, and elegant ways—his flattery, and costly presents; was blind until she awoke to the fact that she loathed him, when it was too late. God knows, I wish she had stuck to you, Mr. Raymond!"

Dock did not reply. There was a pained look upon his manly face; evidently unpleasant memories were crowding upon him.

"Then, if she hated him, why did she go to meet him?" continued Death-Face, jotting down word for word.

"You shouldn't, at present, press too close, boss," interposed Fred Funk, "bearing it in mind that this may be rather an unpleasant subject for the lady to handle. You ought to guess the rest."

"Thank you, boy, for reminding, and I hope you will excuse me, Miss Orwick. We detectives are great to question. I think I understand the case."

"And is there any hope, sir? Oh! do not tell me no! You are a great man, and I am sure you will not refuse to—to—"

"No, miss, we will not refuse to aid you because you are poor," Death-Face replied, kindly. "I will give the case my immediate attention, and my aids here shall work in your behalf."

"Oh, thank you, sir, thank you! God will reward you for your kindness, if I cannot!"

"Never mind about that, lady, for I am always ready to strike in defense of the weak and innocent. As the case lies, there are great chances that this St. Cloud has made way with her—either had her imprisoned or murdered, in case she threatened to make him marry her, which, as I understand it, was evidently her intention. I shall dispatch Fred to the park to learn what he can, and Dock to the Morgue, to examine the latest arrivals of unclaimed dead. I

shall not leave one stone unturned, believe me, that will promise the slimmest chances of success to our undertaking."

Gratefully Nelly thanked them all, and then, after leaving her address, took her leave. Fooly Fred offering his escort as far as Twenty-seventh street, which was accepted, much to his delight, for in secret he was greatly enamored of pretty little Nelly and her sweet, winning ways.

CHAPTER V. SHERRY RAYNOR'S GODSEND.

THE Brooklyn ferry-boat was loaded down well that night, probably owing to the fact that the New York boards offered extra theatrical attraction, such as Booth, the Florences, and Kellogg-Cary at the Academy. The Brooklynites have an educated taste for fine acting, and when they cannot obtain satisfaction upon their own shores, New York receives their patronage. Anyhow, the boat was crowded, when, after the clanking of chains, and the splash of the agitated water about the piled sidings, the boat swung out into the stream, and plowed her way through the waves like some monster of life.

Among the passengers were gentlemen of high business distinction and richly-dressed ladies, who moved in the best society; men-about-town; laborers, and an occasional newsboy and bootblack.

Upon a seat sat a youth of between seventeen and eighteen years, evidently of the "lower ten," if you were to judge by his habiliments.

He was a handsome young fellow, with an erect yet graceful form, such as the ladies admire, and a clear, open, honest face, handsome because of its regularity of features and fresh, healthful glow. His hair was light, and curled in a great mass close to his head; his mouth rather large, yet firm and resolute; his eyes brown, yet possessed of a strange magnetic influence, not allotted to two men in every thousand. His dress was coarse and shabby, and the hat set jauntily upon one side of his head, and the patent-leather boots upon his feet were more dilapidated than was becoming for public display.

Close beside the youth sat a man of some thirty-two or five years, with a dark, unprepossessing face, made the more so by a jet-black, heavy mustache, and eyes and hair of the same fierce shade. He was well dressed, sported a diamond pin and a heavy seal ring, and a massive gold chain, the glitter of which in the early gaslight more than once attracted the gaze of the youth by his side.

The man carried a large bundle across his knees, done up with precision in heavy cream-wove wrapping-paper, and upon this he kept a close watch, as if he had apprehensions for its safety.

His eyes when not riveted upon the bundle rested alternately upon the faces around him, as if expecting or in search of some one, who did not put in an appearance. His movements, nervous and uneasy, indicated that the fellow was greatly agitated.

This might be owing to the presence of a little be-whiskered individual in a long duster, who occupied the opposite seat, in a facing position. He watched his opposite with a gaze piercing enough to be annoying, and more than once the man with the brigandish mustache uttered a fierce curse under his breath, but loud enough for the ears of Sherry Raynor, the youth at his left.

"What's the jig, boss?" was Sherry's cool query, as he saw the man fidget in his seat.

Sherry was not a bashful boy; years of rough-and-tumble existence in the sinful metropolis, had hardened him in manners if not in heart.

"Got a corn that pinches, or a bile? Biles are a plague, sometimes. Make a feller uneasy as a lobster at low tide."

His words called forth another muttered curse from the man; then a question in return.

"Who are you, young man?" was asked, in a low, intense tone, and the man gazed eagerly into Sherry's genial face. "Do you live around here? Are you much acquainted?"

Sherry puffed hard at his cigar, and in a reflective manner, before replying.

"Don't hev any purtlicker lodgin' house, as I know of," he replied, at last, with a grimace. "Roost 'round most ennywheres night overtakes me. Pretty well acquainted 'bout town, yes. Kin point out prominent polertitions ter ye, for a quarter a head; know considerable about the slums an' slumgallions, too."

"Ah! then maybe you can tell me who that man in the long duster is, over across the way."

"Him? Wal, now, I reckon you've snagged your unkle over a bar, sure. Don't identify his mug, ef I've ever seen it. Might figger in fer an alderman, or a detective, tho'!"

"A detective!" the man started, and muttered another curse. And the man on the opposite bench was staring straight at him.

"That pill is as easy with his optics as a Bowery beer-slinger," commented Sherry, gazing reflectively at the cloud of smoke that curled above his head. "He's got his attention pasted snug on you, boss; you tumble to it. Watch out for him, or he'll tickle yer heels."

"Yes, curse him, he has been trailing me about for a week!" replied the man. "I'll tell you how it is, boy, and maybe you can help me. I am from Toronto, Canada. I am the greatest card-player in all the Province. Two months ago I cleaned out Toronto and Ottawa, and then cleared out. But they sent a gang after me to regain what they had lost. I've evaded them without trouble, until that cuss across the way struck my scent, and I cannot shake him. Boy, do you know of a place I can hide in for a few days? I'll pay well to lose yonder devil in the duster!"

"Reckon there's places where no one can find ye!"

replied Sherry, reflectively. "ef ye hed spondulicks ter foot ther bill. Jest shove a V in under yer unkle's nose, and see how quick he'll flop duster inter yonder gentleman's face. Bet he kent find ye 'fore next Centennial; you hear me!"

"Five dollars?" the man stared in surprise. "Five dollars, you say? Why, young man, if you will put me through safe, and throw that hound off the track, I'll give you a thousand dollars—ay, and double the thousand, for I must get out of the presence of that man—must, I say, if I have to spend every farthing I'm worth, for if he were to arrest me, and take me back into the Queen's dominions, they'd shoot me inside of twenty-four hours."

"And you'll give me two thousand dollars if I throw yonder crab off scent, d'ye say?" demanded Sherry, nearly yelling out in his excitement.

"Yes, I'll give you every cent of it, and as proof of my honesty, when we're out of immediate observation, I'll surrender this bundle to you, in which you will find that amount!"

And the man tapped the parcel, significantly. "All right, boss; I'm yer clam, where there's dudads forthcoming—just put yer paw on that, you hear me! What's your cognomen?"

"My name is—well, call me Faro Phil. That will answer as well as any other, I guess. Ha! the old devil is gone from his seat, across yonder."

"So he has!" assented Sherry, with a wink. "Smells a mice, an' has gone to the front of the boat to set his trap. But I'll show him a trick worth two of that. Cum along her ter this hind end. The machine ar' going to turn around before running into Fulton street. Don't yer see ther 'orses'd hev ter back off, if she ran in front end?"

"So they would," replied Faro Phil, as he followed his young guide to what was then the rear portion of the boat. "But, where did we make the turn? I did not notice it."

"Around that man-o'-war, back there. See! she are swingin' around again. Now, look out! Ther minnit she touches pier jump, an' foller yer unkle."

The bell rung, the passengers crowded forward, and at last with a splashing of the water, and the shouts of men, the boat rubbed against the pier.

Sherry was off in a moment, and striding swiftly out of the ferry-house into Fulton street, closely followed by his dark-faced companion.

"Got any loose cash 'bout yer?" he asked, as they halted a moment outside the ferry-house. "Better take a cab, fer a while. Quick, or yer shadder'll spy you!"

They both sprang into a waiting cab, and Sherry gave the directions in a low tone.

Then the door was slammed shut, and the carriage whirled away, but not in time for the two occupants to miss seeing a man rush out from the crowd and gaze around him. It was the gentleman in the linen duster, who had annoyed Faro Phil on the boat.

"He's stuck worse'n a clam in red mud!" laughed Sherry, enjoying the sport, while his companion bit fiercely at his brigandish mustache. They had a view of the scene from the little back window. "Drat the luck, he's bounced that policeman; yes, and by jingo he's tumbled 'im to it. He's cabbed himself, an' now look out fer a race!"

Faro Phil swore roundly, when he saw that his old enemy had indeed jumped into a cab, which was starting off in pursuit of them.

"Say, how d'ye like it?" Sherry laughed. "Hain't afeard, are you? Simon Peter! we're goin' to scoot ther rooster, just like castor-oil off in an icicle, you heer yer unkle! Hello there, driver?"

"What's wanted?" came back the response. "D'ye see that kerridge snuckin' up 'ahind ye, back there?"

"Yes; I see it." "Well, ef you wanten finger-fondle an X, put us outside o' the chap's vision in less time than a cat can slide off a house roof when brickbats are plenty. D'ye tumble to it?"

"Yours, truly!" came back the reply, and then the cab whirled along at an increased rate of speed. And the pursuing vehicle also came on rapidly. Evidently it was to be a close race.

"A few pounds of steam more, boss!" Sherry yelled. "Softly on ther trottle and let her rip!"

"Ay, ay!" responded Cabby.

"And rope us out, first opportunity."

"Yours, truly."

Then the cab plunged on at what seemed a terrible rate of speed, to the two men, but at no less velocity came the pursuing cab.

"Curse the pursuing hound!" growled Faro Phil; watching the space over which they went, through the lamp-lit streets. "I believe he'll overtake us, after all."

"Bet another thousan' on't!" demanded Sherry, with a grin. "You may count me euchered if that game rooster spots us ef ye'll only give the case inter my grip. Seen such as him before. Reckon I twig his jib, superfine. Double interdual—one side out; t'other side in under disguise. His sign-board spells, Death-Face, Detective!"

"The devil!" Faro Phil fiercely yelled, growing strangely white for a dark complexioned man. "It is not that cuss!"

"Dunno; can't most allus tell, as ther old man Tell sed, afore he shot the apple. Possible it might be the same Death-Face. Why? w'at d'ye know o' him? Thort you's a Canadian?"

"I've read of him," was all the retort Faro Phil vouchsafed.

"Yes," accepted Sherry, obliquely closing one eye. "I suppose so."

But, the expression in his tone proved that he didn't suppose anything of the kind. And Faro Phil was not so dumb as not to understand it, but he gave no proof of his knowledge.

On came the pursuing cab, at as great a speed as was permissible through important streets of the metropolis, and on went the cab in which the two had taken passage.

"Why don't the accursed idiot turn off Fulton street?" raved the gambler, as he saw that the following cab was in reality gaining.

His words were answered by the turning of the cab into Broadway, where the crowd was dense and black. The rumbling of the great busses and cracking of whips, and shouts of contending drivers, made strange noises on the night.

"Now, boss!" cried Sherry, keeping an eye out, "put about fifteen dollars down here on the seat fer our back fare, and then prepare yourself fer a grand fling. I'm fer debouchin' inter sum o' this 'ere crowd an' eludin' our old perennial."

Faro Phil took a large roll of bills from the pocket of his white vest and laid a twenty out of it upon the seat.

By this time the jam usual at Broadway and Fulton was encountered, and the cab was forced to slacken speed to scarcely a walk.

"Come, now's our harvest!" cried Sherry, and the next moment he had the cab door open, and was out and making his way in among the immense crowd that thronged the pave. He hurried along swiftly, for a few moments, without looking back, but when he did, it was to discover that Faro Phil was not behind him. He was about to wonder at this, when the report of a pistol was heard, and the crowd involuntarily paused and surged back to learn the cause.

To Sherry it was at once apparent.

Faro Phil had been nabbed and had attempted resistance. And he, Sherry, had possession of the mysterious bundle. He had grabbed it in his leap from the cab.

What was in it? Had Faro Phil told the truth about its containing two thousand? A wild tumult was rising in Sherry's heart as he thought of the enormity of the sum to him.

"An' I'm a baked clam ef it ain't a-going to be mine!" he muttered. "Don't reckon I come dishonestly by it. Honesty's the best policy, they say, but it don't say nothin' 'bout two thousand dollar policies."

Half an hour later, he sought a lodging house in a side street, and engaged a room, in which he locked himself. Then, with rapidly-beating heart, he quickly undid the bundle.

And the gambler, Faro Phil, had not lied to him!

Inside were rolls of bank notes, none of whose denominations were less than fifty dollars—bills on all the important banks of the country—bills that were new and crisp, and bills that were old and well-worn—all in one great bulk. It was more than the delighted boy had dared to hope, and swinging his hat aloft, he gave vent to his feelings in a wild cry of ecstasy.

CHAPTER VI.

COME EASY, GO EASY.

SHERRY RAYNOR was not dishonest, or unscrupulous. His parents had died when he was ten years of age, leaving him and a twin sister, alone upon the charities of a cold, pitiless world.

They were penniless and ragged, and starvation stared them in the face, until a kind-hearted baker took Sherry into his employ, where he had remained until two years previous to our story, when the old man died, and the boy was thrown out of work.

Since then he had roamed about the city, catching a job here and there—generally lucky and a prime favorite among the boys of his age, for Sherry's quickness and alertness had rescued various ones from many a scrape. Of his twin sister, Leo, he had heard only once in the time since they had parted, when he had gone into the service of the baker. Then she was working in a picture gallery on Broadway. But he had never found time to go and see her while at the baker's, and after his liberty, when he sought her, she had gone away from the gallery, and no one knew of her whereabouts. But he found a picture of her—a tall, promising girl of seventeen, with surpassing prettiness of feature and form—a fair maiden approaching the threshold of a glorious womanhood.

He purchased the picture, and put it in his pocket; then, when no other occupation prevented, he passed away his hours in wandering about the city, hoping by some chance to stumble upon Leo.

And Sherry had another object in these rambles. He was literally trying to kill two birds with one stone, for he had a little love romance of his own, locked up in his heart. It was now full a year since he had caught a glance of the eyes that had fascinated him one summer's night upon the Fulton Ferry, and the roguish little face and petite form that had so entirely captivated him. And the owner of this little form and roguish face had slipped a paper in his hand with the one word written thereon—*Fay!*

Fay! Ah! how many nights Sherry Raynor went to sleep with that name on his lips; and the temptations to which she was exposed in this great wicked metropolitan city.

And now!

Before him lay in a pile, where his fingers had arranged it, a fortune such as he had never dreamed of possessing—a fortune that would lift him from the streets, and place him forever above want.

He could see the sights of the city—of the world, if he wished, and then have money left. He could have fast horses, board at a first-class hotel, and cut a general swell.

But, ah! then came the question—was all this *rightfully* his? He was not dishonest, but the temptation to take this "find"—this gambler's bank—

and appropriate it to his own use, was too strong to resist.

"I'll be scooped up fer oysters, if 'tain't mine, now!" he muttered, handling over the notes as carefully as if they were tissue. "Thet chap come by them dishonest, so I orter keep 'em from him, which would be honest, now, wouldn't it? I've a notion ter begin bizness at once, and see the sights."

"I would, too, Sherry, if I were you," replied a voice, and glancing hastily around, the startled youth beheld a second individual of somewhere near his own age, standing looking composedly over his shoulder.

"Hello!" Sherry was upon his feet in a moment, his fists clenched for combat. "How in Simon Peter did you git in?"

"Was in, before you came," laughed the other, good-naturedly. "Didn't you spy me lying on the bed, yonder? I got up and dressed while you were undoing your prize. Where 'd ye make the raise?"

Sherry did not answer the question. He was staring straight at the youth, a light of recognition beaming in his eye—a wild, unaccountable throbbing in the region of his heart.

The youth was a little shorter of stature than himself, and more plump and rounded of form, with a round face, that was strikingly handsome in its delicate outlines, and rosy-and-cream complexion, and eyes that were hazel and wondrously attractive in their glances; while the hair, of a lightish shade, was closely cut, in the prevailing style. The face was not graced with beard, and if it ever had been, it had been recently shaven. The dress of the youth was of faultless elegance, of the costliest material, while in his immaculate shirt-front sparkled a thousand-rayed diamond cluster pin, and a ring of the same precious material glittered upon the little finger of his left hand, which was as small and white, nearly as a woman's.

Patent-leathers upon his feet, a silk hat upon his head, and a gold-headed cane in hand, completed the outfit of the young gentleman of leisure, at whom Sherry Raynor gazed in a sort of fascination.

"You are—Fay's brother!" he declared, at last, decisively. "Ain't you?"

"What do you know about Fay, I should like to know?"

"Durned little—not half as much as I should like to," Sherry responded, earnestly. "I saw her on the Fulton ferry, nigh a year ago."

"Oh! so you're the young fellow she give the paper to eh? Just like one of her harum-scarum pranks. And I suppose your innocent young heart was won, there and then?"

"Dunno ef it's any o' your business!" Sherry answered, with spirit. He didn't particularly admire the insinuating manner of the fellow.

"Oh! you needn't be so sassy. Maybe I can help along your case, a bit, if you don't get your back up. My cognomen is Charley Evans. Yours is Raynor, is it?"

"Reckon it is," Sherry was studying Mr. Charley Evans very closely. "Where do thet purty sister o' yours hang out?"

"Here in the city. A nobby gal is she, too. You must see her sometime, and make her acquaintance. But, for the present, other business. I see you're flush of money. Expect it isn't none of my business where you got it?"

"Not a mite of your business," replied Sherry, independently, lighting a cigar, and puffing away, coolly.

He had received a fair education while in the baker's employ, and could converse as correctly as any one, when he chose, or could master the slang of the street as fast as any of the boys.

"If it were any of your business, that would be another side to the case, you see. But, it ain't."

"Of course not," Evans assented. "But I believe I heard you remark that you proposed going out to-night, to enjoy yourself. I am of that turn of mind, also, and I argue we had better go together. I'll venture to say you don't know the ropes, while I do, and if we cannot have a boss time, I'll vote for Tweed. Will you come?"

"Reckon so, ef that's music in the air. But what is yer programme? I must blossom out in new togs afore I can be received inter society."

"And must drop the gutter dialect, too, for recollect you're no longer a street Arab, but a gentleman of leisure with all that money."

Sherry counted out a thousand dollars, and concealed it about his person, and then did the remainder up in a bundle, and signified his readiness for departure.

"What are you going to do with that bundle?" demanded Evans, showing his disgust at walking with a person who carried parcels.

"Reckon I'm goin' to tote it along," replied Sherry, independently. "Ef you don't walk along wi' yer uncle, why there's two directions ter Raxter street."

Evans laughed good-naturedly, and they made their way toward Broadway, but it was noticeable that a good many passers-by glanced amusedly at the two youths, at once taking in the contrast of their dress.

Straight into one of the first tailoring establishments of Broadway, Sherry went, followed by his companion. It was an immense place, with great stacks of cloths, grand mirrors, gorgeous chandeliers, and hurrying clerks, and a place no one need venture in for low prices.

Evans stood back near the door, and let Sherry break his own path. And he was not afraid to stem the tide, either. He sauntered leisurely along, stopping now and then to examine a piece of goods, or stare into the great mirrors, which were much beyond any thing he had ever seen. At first the austere clerks regarded him with disdain, and exchanged winks and smiles at his expense. And he was not slow to realize that he was going to be neglected,

for none of the clerks paid him the least attention. Shabby customers are rarely well treated in Broadway palaces.

Sherry well knew this, but determined was he not to be snubbed.

Presently he saw a tall elderly personage, wearing gold-rimmed spectacles, issue from the cashier's office, and make his way toward the front of the store, and he layd him at once.

"Be you the boss of this shebang?" Sherry demanded, confronting him and blocking his passage.

"I am the proprietor, yes, sir," replied the gentleman, gazing down at the boy, an expression of fun in his eyes. "Such being the case, what can I do for you, my young friend?"

Sherry stared.

"You're a fust-class hoss!" he declared, after a moment—"what they call a gentleman. I twig your jib, superfine. An' now, may I ask ye, w'at d'ye keep these supernumerary round heer fer?"

"My clerks? Why, to wait upon customers, of course."

"Generally pick out sich as they keer ter wait upon, an' let the others slide off on their ear, I reckon."

"Certainly not. Have you not been waited upon? Do you wish to purchase?"

"Shouldn't wonder if I might invest a hundred in togs, ef I can get anybody to wait onter my royal nibs."

"Of course. I'll see to this. Hawley, this way," and Mr. J— motioned to his foreman.

"Why has not this young gentleman been waited upon sir?"

"He?" and the foreman gave Sherry a withering glance; "why, he's from the streets, sir; he has no money."

"D'ye want ter wait out back an' tell me that?" Sherry asked, bristling up. "Bet a baked clam, wi' free lunch added in, gratuitous, and a five-cent pony, thet I can muster more currency than you, or a dozen like you."

The foreman flushed hotly.

"See here, no more of this!" exclaimed Mr. J—, sharply. "Hawley, never let it be said that you, or any of those under you, neglected a customer, because his attire did not favorably correspond with your own, or I shall dispense with your services. This is my store, and the rich and poor shall be treated with the same due courtesy. Please remember that."

"You're a solid man, you are, Mr. What-ever-your-name-is!" cried Sherry, in delight. "I war poor once myself, and I'm not above 'em yet—tumble ter that! Now, you supernumery, ef yer ready, show me the best block o' stuff in yer hull establishment, you hear yer uncle!"

Mr. J— made his way out into the street, a broad smile playing about his mouth.

"That boy has a sharp tongue, and is nobody's fool," he mused. "That little incident has been a lesson. I wonder who he is?"

And a great many wondered who Reckless Sherry was before he got through with his fortune. A young Coal Oil Johnnie some dubbed him.

Hawley showed him several patterns of goods, but Sherry shook his head grimly.

"You can't throw chaff in my eyes, Mickey!" he said, coolly. "Take me fer a skim-milk idiot, don't ye? Reckon I can't locate shoddy from ther jennywine fabric, I s'pect. Guess I do. Just tumble out sumthin' superfine, or you're bound ter git the grand fling, fer I ain't foolin'!"

The foreman began to realize that he couldn't trifle with "the boy from the streets," and threw down one of the costliest pieces of goods in the house.

"That's ter f'ee. You are talkin', now," announced Sherry. "I twig that cloth ter a dot. How much fer a pair o' brichelloons, a vest, and a coat, all in the latest style. Speak up!"

"One hundred and twelve dollars and warranted to suit. Take your measure?"

"Oh! Well, yes, ye can fit my figger, and mind ye get a good fit."

The measure was taken, and paying half the price down, Sherry rejoined Evans who was waiting near the door.

An hour later he had taken a suit of rooms in the Fifth avenue, having first rigged himself out in a nice suit of ready-made clothing, he had purchased, in which he looked even gayer than Fay's brother.

His clothing was fine, his white vest and shirt being done-up to perfection; in the jewelry line, he had purchased a diamond pin and two costly rings; his silk hat, evening gloves, and gold-headed cane completed his nobby appearance.

"Now, where?" he demanded, when he was settled in his new quarters. "Goin' ter interdoce me ter that sister o' your'n, ain't ye?"

"Not yet," replied Evans, with a laugh. "We'll have a supper at Delmonico's first, and then drop in at some theater, after which we will take a trip up on Twenty-seventh street. You know all about faro and roulette, I suppose?"

"Not I! I ain't much on high-toned games."

"That is bad. But I will play for you. You must redeem yourself."

"How d'ye mean?"

"You must sweep some faro table of enough to make back what you have spent to-night," explained Evans.

They left their rooms and took a cab to Delmonico's. Here they had a game and wine supper, after which Evans led the way to Daly's Fifth avenue theater, where the Two Orphans was having a tremendous run.

By luck they secured a couple of reserved seats, from which position in the parquette circle, they could overlook the house.

Sherry was instantly interested in the play, and did not pay much attention to the audience, which, on the contrary, Evans watched narrowly, by aid of one of a pair of gold-mounted opera-glasses which his companion had procured at a fashionable store on Broadway.

And at last he was evidently rewarded, for he smiled and bowed to a couple of ladies who occupied the opposite proscenium box, after which he clutched Sherry by the arm.

"Look! old boy; there they are in the box across yonder! They belong in Gaylord's gambling palace on Twenty-seventh street. Come along!"

CHAPTER VII.

LIFE IN A GAMBLING PALACE.

EVANS rose as if about to leave the theater.

"Where you goin'?" demanded Sherry. "I ain't takin' in any sich kind o' pettycoatry."

"They are all right, only they're gamblers. Come along. Don't you see the audience is staring? Come along, I say."

Sherry followed, rather reluctantly. He was opposed to associating with disreputable people, and did not know what kind of a den Evans might be conniving to entrap him into. But he had a strong will when he chose to exert it, and he was resolved to balk, when any unwarranted temptations might be set forth.

He noticed that the two females had also quitted their box, and was not therefore much surprised when they all met in the lobby, outside.

"Ladies, Emperor, Prince William, of Austria!" introduced Evans. "Prince William, the Baroness Lulu and Princess Alee."

Sherry acknowledged the introduction with a grace Evans had not deemed him capable of, while the ladies courted low.

"How are things upon the royal thoroughfare, baroness?" Evans asked of the elder of the two, both of whom were young and beautiful, and dressed richly. "Is there a chance for two at the table of knights, this eve?"

"Yes, my lord. There is always room in Queen Mab's palace for those who are in the circle," was the reply; whereupon Evans offered her an arm, and led the way, while Sherry followed with the Princess Alee. This was new work for him. He had never been much in the presence of the opposite sex, and to have the charming princess hanging upon his arm, and chatting incessantly, was a new realization to him.

The first cab was hailed, and soon they were dropped upon Twenty-seventh street, before a grand brown-stone, which stood in a yard, that was a very paradise of flowers and rustic arbors and musically-dripping fountains. Sherry was amazed, and had he been alone he would have boiled over with outlandish expressions of admiration, which he now was forced to hold in check.

The baroness led the way, entering by aid of latch-key. Inside, the hall was luxurious and elaborate, in the greatest degree, and the glimpse Sherry caught of the parlors, as they were ushered up the staircase, was enchanting, so grandly were they furnished and lighted.

They were occupied, too, by scores of brilliantly-dressed women and men, who looked strangely weird under the bluish-tinted gaslight.

But a greater surprise was in store. At the head of the stairs, they entered a gorgeous saloon parlor, very wide, and running the entire length of the building. And such a scene Sherry had never witnessed, nor dreamt of. The room was furnished throughout in crimson, the furniture consisting of chairs, luxurious sofas, card, wine and faro tables; the carpets, the sweeping lace and damask curtains, the unvalued statuary and immense mirrors and chandeliers, were all the costliest that a lavish expenditure of money could procure.

And around the faro tables, of which there were three, were gathered gayly dressed men and women—men whom Sherry knew to hold prominence in business circles; young men and old, gay men and grave; while of the richly-clad females, none were evidently older than thirty-five, ranging from that down to twenty. And the champagne-scented atmosphere, and weird music of clinking glasses, added a strange, irresistible charm to the fascinating hour.

"How like it, Prince!" asked Evans, looking back at Sherry, who had paused with his companion, and was breathlessly drinking in the panorama of beauty. "Isn't it immense?"

"You tumble to it!" assented Sherry, with a sigh, half regretful that the spell had been broken.

"You're a hoss, you are, Charley. Nicer'n a church at Christmas time, ain't it?"

Evans came back, and drew him one side, mysteriously.

"You must choose better language, if you want to succeed in here," he said, kindly, but advisingly. "It won't take."

"All right; try my best; bet a baked clam I'll blurt out sumthin' improper, afore the night's over, tho'. Hello! see that old gold-eyed spectacled rooster, over yonder at the table, wi' a feminine hangin' over his shoulder. I twig his jib, superfine, you bet! Got my new brichelloons o' him."

"Sh! hush that slang talk!" cautioned Evans. "It won't do for us to recognize any one we know in here."

"Won't, hey? Well, what's the lay out?"

"You are to keep in Alee's company, this evening. The girl is struck after you, and you must keep her in your graces. Try faro, and let her play for you, and you'll come out ahead."

Then the Princess Alee led the way and seated herself at a table where the heaviest stakes were playing, Sherry standing by, as most of the gamblers

did, who allowed the nimble-fingered sirens to choose for their luck.

"How much will you risk?" asked Alee, after they had watched the game a few moments. "Quick, now!" in a low tone; "fifty dollars, and you sweep the board, I think."

Sherry threw down a fifty, and Alee exchanged it with the banker for one of those round ivories, that so often lose and win fortunes, in our great cities.

She gave it to Sherry, with a smile. "Now, sir, your turn next. Cover your diamond queen. That's it," as Sherry obeyed. "Now, then, watch and wait."

The game went round, and—the bank won on the sweep of the board.

"Better luck, next time, gentlemen," assured Queen Mab, the banker, with a smile, as she raked in the ivories. "I wouldn't get discouraged," as two of the gentlemen withdrew.

"Don't you get discouraged," whispered Alee, giving Sherry a strange glance, that thrilled him. "I'm going to regain your confidence in me, before long. See, there are six against the bank, and there is going to be heavy playing. You notice that man across there, with the black mustache? He has the greatest luck of any of our patrons. His name is Ned St. Cloud. The gentleman's next to him is Clarence Seymour. He is also exceptionally lucky. But, you are not going to lose, while I play for you."

"Thank you," replied Sherry. "Your kindness I shall not forget. You're a hos—" But he thought of Evans's warning, in time to avoid a blunder.

"How many checks do we want?"

"Let me see," said Alee, counting the board;

"Madam has five hundred on King Heart. You purchase five one hundreds, and cap the queen."

"Isn't this rather dangerous—this playing with hearts?" asked Sherry, with a laugh, as he received his checks.

"Well, sometimes—yes," Alee replied, with a soft flush tingling her cheek; "more especially with you gentlemen, as we girls are more versed in playing with hearts."

"No doubt of it. And you have the power to break them—the real ones, I mean—as easily as you can tear one of those painted ones asunder."

"Oh! certainly; but we generally have such caloused ones to handle, that we grow indifferent and careless. But when we find a true one, we are more discreet. Play, my prince, for the game awaits."

Accordingly, Sherry deposited his checks upon the queen of hearts—and won the game, coming off with over a thousand dollars worth of checks.

"Good!" Alee said, delight expressed in her tone, as she stacked up the ivories. "You won; I am in duty bound to order the champagne for you."

And slipping a fifty check into the hand of a uniformed colored waiter, she called the champagne for the table. And when it came, it proved to be of the best. Both Alee and Sherry drank lightly, but this was not the case with the others, and then Queen Mab, who was too grand a looking woman to be at the head of a gaming establishment, called another game.

At Alee's request Sherry invested heavily, and played under her directions, though the beautiful girl was careful not to let Madam Mab hear her tendered advice to the new visitor.

The girls are in duty bound to respect the bank, at Queen Mab's, and to play into its treasury; but, it was apparent that Alee was off the rules to-night.

Anyhow, at the end of two hours, Sherry was the possessor of two thousand dollars' worth of checks!

Alee was the first to notice this fact, so interested had Sherry been in the game.

"You are one thousand and eight hundred dollars ahead of investment sir," she said, paling slightly as she caught the ominous glitter in Queen Mab's eye.

"Will you stop?"

"Yes, I had best," replied Sherry, who had also caught madam's severe glance.

"Will you honor my checks, your queenliness," and he counted out his pile of ivories. Queen Mab raked them in, spitefully, and counted out the money, which Sherry pocketed with a bow.

"Come," whispered Alee, drawing his arm through hers. "We had best watch the other games, a while. Your winnings have been the means of angering the Queen."

"Yes, and what is the penalty?" asked Sherry.

"She will scold you."

"No; she will simply write my discharge papers, and I need no longer visit this establishment."

"Why is this?"

"Because I did not play into the bank. I could have bet so you would have lost double what you have won."

"I suppose so; you have the hang of cards; why didn't you?"

"Because—well—well, because I didn't see fit. Won't that do as an answer?" with a faint little laugh.

"Yes, I suppose so. What will you do if you are discharged?"

"I'll marry the first wealthy gentleman who offers me his heart and hand."

"Pshaw! that's nice. But, in event that individual is minus?"

"I'll apply for a position in the ballet."

"No you won't! Your jib wasn't cut for the ballet!" declared Sherry. "I'll see to you, you tumble to that! I've got chips, and as long as they last, you ain't a goin' ter associate yerself wi' no bally, you hear me!"

Alee did not reply, but she clung closer to Sherry's arm, as if feeling assurance in his protection. She was a beautiful creature, rising seventeen years, with a slender, sylph-like form, a fair, pure complexion, hazel eyes and chestnut hair, and a mouth of tempting sweetness. Her dress was costly and elegant,

and the jewels she wore were by no means inferior. Yet she was so different from the other girls of Queen Mab's establishment, Sherry could but notice the contrast. He felt that, though she had been found in this gambling den, she was virtuous beyond allurement, and this was not to be said of all, though Queen Mab's establishment is ever governed by the most imperative and rigid system of order. It bears at least a respectable reputation among gambling dens.

As they strolled along through the great palace parlor, Sherry wondered if the contrast between this place and his former haunts could all be real.

Presently they paused at a table, where Evans and the baroness were engaged. The former's watch, rings and diamond pin were just going into the banker's hands for more checks.

"Hello! what's the row? Broke, boss?" demanded Sherry, stepping up.

"Yes; if I lose this time, I'm whipped," replied Evans, a haggard expression in his eyes.

"Not while yer uncle's about!" cried Sherry, making a dive into his pocket and fetching out a roll of bills. "Here is a thousand. Bet it ag'in' the bank on queen of hearts, an' I'll stand ye, you tumble to that!"

"Sh! you're kind, but please avoid that gutter language," remonstrated Evans, in a low tone.

And then he accepted the loan, and put it upon the card as per directions; and, amid much excitement, he won. After that he was more successful, and finally left the table a couple of hundred ahead.

He found Sherry and Alee in the magnificent parlors down-stairs, partaking of wine and refreshments, as scores were doing.

The little female gambler was chatting gayly, and it was plain to see that Sherry was greatly interested in her. And before he had left the gambling-house, just the darkest hour before dawn, she had promised to ride with him in the park, in the following afternoon.

Sherry went from the scene of excitement to the elegantly-furnished suite of rooms he had engaged at the Fifth avenue, parting with Evans at the hotel entrance.

Once in his rooms, he took a bath, and then sought the slumber he had so much needed. He awoke about noon, feeling considerably refreshed and after ordering a tempting repast, proceeded to dispatch it, after which he sauntered out of the hotel upon the crowded streets.

The day was clear, but not nearly so warm as usual, and countless pleasure rigs were driving along the avenue toward the Central Park.

"Now the first thing is a caboose ter ride my fair inamority in!" he muttered. "I must have something gay, too, and where'll I go to get it? Bah! I'll stand where I am, and buy the first rig that takes my eye."

And accordingly he stood upon the curb, and watched the rigs that sped gayly by through the soft sunlight.

Presently, he saw a handsome phaeton, drawn by two spanking handsome bays, come dashing down the avenue, with many eyes following them.

Straight out into the street strode the youth, and at his beckon the driver drew rein, surprise beaming in his countenance, while his lady companion stared at Sherry, haughtily.

"D'ye own this turnout?" Sherry demanded, taking a glance over the horses, harness, and phaeton, in a moment.

"Certainly I own it!" replied the man, surlily.

"What if I do, or do not, sir?"

"I'll give you twelve hundred dollars fer it, spot cash."

"What! are you crazy, sir?"

"Not a bit, my clam. Here's the rocks; so take 'em, and pile out, or else drive on."

The man seized the money, and sprung out, with alacrity.

"Come, Celeste," he said, offering to assist his companion to alight.

"Oh! surely not here, in the middle of the street, Penfield!" exclaimed she, in righteous horror, as she beheld a crowd collecting.

But the husband was obstinate, and one of New York's fashion queens quitted her conveyance in the middle of Fifth avenue, while one of New York's fast young men took possession of it, and drove triumphantly off.

CHAPTER VIII. DEATH-FACE ALERT.

DEATH-FACE, the detective, had given Nelly Orwick promise that he would take her case in charge, and he was every man of his word. He commenced by dispatching Pooty Fred to the park, to find what clues he might of the missing Celia, and Dandy Dick to the morgue to go over the late arrivals of unclaimed dead, while he in person went to the establishment of Cuthbert St. Cloud, broker, in Wall street, and demanded to see the proprietor, announcing his business as of greatest importance. And so it was, considering the case.

The broker, a gray-haired, sharp-eyed little speculator of fifty years, with more of a display of dress than became so old a man, received him in his back reception office, with a cool salutation.

"Mr. Cuthbert St. Cloud, I believe?" Death-Face said, declining the proffered chair.

"Yes, sir; that is my name. What can I do for you to-day?" and the man rubbed his hands, patronizingly.

"You can give me a little information; I believe that is all to-day. You have a son, have you not—a young gentleman with dark eyes, hair, mustache and complexion?"

"Oh! certainly; that is Edward. Splendid young

fellow when once you thoroughly know him. Your business, I take it, relates to him?"

"It does—especially with him. Can you direct me to him?"

"Ah! I am sorry to disappoint you, but I cannot. I do not even know of his present whereabouts."

"Indeed, and I wanted to see him so badly. You even do not know if he is in the city, then?"

"Not positively; might have run down to Cape May—or, maybe in the city."

"Is he married?"

"Ha! ha! no—not he! Loves his freedom and independence too well to think of tying a woman to his coat-tails."

"Ahem! yes. Well, if I can obtain no information of you, I must be going," Death-Face said, preparing to depart. "You know of none of his haunts where a person would be likely to find him?"

"Hardly; it is uncertain just where to look for him."

"Very well; I can perhaps find him. Good-day, sir," and he took his departure from the broker's office.

Going back to the rooms of the tenement in Mulberry street, he found both Dock and Fred awaiting his arrival.

"Nothing at the morgue," Dock announced, with a gloomy shake of the head.

"Ah! then there is some hopes that she has not been killed. Might have jumped into the river, though."

"And more than probable that's the solution of the problem."

"But we won't accept of it yet. What is your report, Fred?"

"Found the place, but nothing more, captain. Guess it's a tough'un."

"But we've handled worse ones, by ten-fold. Dock, where is Queen Mab's?"

"The place I spoke of visiting on Twenty-seventh street. Why?"

"You must get into it and use your eyes. You may have to gamble, but let it be in close proximity to a young fellow with dark complexion, dark eyes, hair, and mustache. Watch him narrowly, and find out where he goes to when he leaves."

"All right. Who is the chap?"

"Some of our game—St. Cloud by name."

"Ah, curse him! I'll indeed watch him, then. I shall have to go in disguise, for fear of recognition."

"And how shall I amuse myself, boss?" asked Fred, with a yawn. "I long for something to relieve the monotony."

"Well, you may keep an eye on both rivers for a couple of days, and see what is fished up in the shape of bodies. Though my expectations of finding this missing girl are not in that direction."

"God grant that she is alive," said Dock Raymond, quitting the room.

That afternoon, a bent, gray-haired and whiskered little old man sauntered into one of the many variety beer-gardens, of which New York can boast, and seating himself at a table, called for cheese and beer, which he proceeded very leisurely to dispatch, while he watched the performance. He was dressed in outlandish style, and everything about his make-up, from his stogy boots to his old ragged wool hat and unkempt locks, proclaimed him to be a veteran from the rural districts.

He watched the performance with evident huge delight, a broad grin distorting his hairy countenance, and occasionally, at some ludicrous remark of the comedians, or extra caper of the brazen-faced females who paraded across the stage, he would burst into a yell of delight, his sides shaking with hearty laughter.

The afternoon was exceedingly hot, and the cool gardens were crowded by the heated and thirsty.

And many were the curious glances leveled at the old "coot" from the country, as he sat and enjoyed both the performance and his beer. Ignorance is said to be bliss, and the old man might have been deemed in a blissful state, if such was really the case. Certain it was that he appeared ignorant enough.

Two stylishly dressed young gentlemen, evidently street-advertisers of the latest fashions, came in, and took possession of the bench just ahead of the ruralite.

Much to his disgust, too, for he reached over and tapped one of them on the shoulder, rather heavily.

"Hello!" cried one, the darker of the twain, looking around with a fierce oath. "What is the matter with you, old man? Keep your dirty paws where they belong!"

"Eh?" and he from the rural districts put one hand to the place where an ear might have been supposed to have sprouted, but was now invisible, owing to the great locks of wiry hair; "what d'ye say, youngster? I'm leetle hard o' heerin', in my left ear."

"I say, keep your paws to home, or I'll show you!" growled the dandy.

"Nice show? Oh! yes, mighty nice. Sum o' them gals can kick like a yearling steer, I tell you. Yes, mighty nice show. Like to hev my boy Peter see it."

"Who said anything about the show, you old ignoramus? I say keep your dirty hooks off from me, or I'll treat you to a knock-down."

"Treat me, did you say? All kerect, boyee. Ye 'peer ter seem kinder natteral—like my family; resemble my Peter considerable. Yes, 'et is kinder dry. Waiter, fetch three bottles o' thet stuff, you call champagne. I'll stand the shot, boys."

And rural fetched one hand out of his capacious pantaloons pocket, in which was grasped with triumph a huge roll of bills—genuine greenbacks, every one of them.

"Ha! by Jove, Seymour, look at the old sinner's pile, will you!" whispered Ned St. Cloud, cautiously, to his companion.

"We must lay for him."

"Exactly. It will be easy enough to bleed the old idiot," replied Seymour, confidently. "He'll go back to the country with his wisdom teeth out." The champagne was brought, and glasses filled; then the ruralite laid down a fifty-dollar note in payment, receiving back four tens.

"Well, old boss, what's your name?" said St. Cloud, as he and Seymour changed their positions so that they faced their intended victim. "We generally like to know whom we drink with."

"Eh? what's my name?" queried the old man, restoring his money to his huge pocket. "Well, I reckon it's a good un, ef I do say it. I'm Tobias—Silas Tobias, from Cornfield Center, Vermont. You'll find lot's o' Tobiases in Cornfield. There's Jim Tobias, Sam Tobias, Jacob Tobias, Zackariah Taylor Tobias, Godfrey Tobias, Zackariah Taylor Tobias's son Josiah, Peter, Hank, Zebulom, Aaron, John, Saul, Job, Obed, Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, and Andrew Johnson Tobias, besides—"

"Hold on, for Heaven's sake!" interrupted St. Cloud, "that will do. Our names are respectively Fletcher and Brandon. Drink, old man—here's to your success!"

And the glasses were emptied, refilled and emptied repeatedly, until the last bottle's contents were exhausted.

And much to the surprise of the two sharpers, who were themselves not a little affected by the drink, old Uncle Silas Tobias was as sober and lively as a cricket.

"See here!" Seymour said, in a cautious tone, "we've got to let up on this drinking, or we're euchered. The old cuss'll stand a barrel, for these country bucks have cast-iron stomachs. We'll have to try another tack."

"Well, a-all right, Fletcher. You 'tend to it, and I'll watch. I'm ducedly sleepy."

"But that'll never do. Wake up. Say, old man, d'ye ever play cards?"

"Waal, yes, I sometimes take a hand," replied Tobias, indifferently. "My boy Peter is great at old sledge, I tell you."

"All right; come along to the club-rooms, and we'll have a social game. Come along, Fletcher."

And the two sharpers and their supposed "flat" left the garden, and sauntered leisurely toward Broadway. The club-room was reached in the course of half an hour, during which time both Seymour and St. Cloud had leisure to dissipate the effects of their champagne.

The club-room was upon the fourth-floor front of a large building, the first, second, and third floors of which were unoccupied; the building itself being the individual property of St. Cloud.

The cause of its vacancy was because of the unreasonable high rents demanded.

The club-room was fitted up in handsome style, tables, desks, chairs, sofas, and settees comprising the furniture.

A few fashionably-attired fellows were lounging about, a few smoking, others reading, and others playing cards; but all left soon after the entrance of St. Cloud, Seymour and Uncle Tobias.

The three seated themselves at a table, and began to play. The first game was won by St. Cloud.

Old Tobias winked one eye as the cards were dealt out.

"I'll bet five hundred dollars ag'in' the same, put up by you two, that I win," he said, slowly and speculatively.

"Agreed! Seymour, you will find a roll of bills in yonder desk," St. Cloud said, offering a cigar to the man from Vermont, while he was lighting one himself. "What! don't you smoke?"

"Not when playin' keards, youngster," replied the old man, with a sage shake of his head. "Smoke allus gits up my nose an' makes me sneeze."

Seymour brought a large roll of fresh crisp greenbacks, and laid them upon the table.

"There you are, old stag—two thousand dollars!" the young villain said, with a grin. "Can you cover it?"

Uncle Silas took up the bills, hefted them, and then smelt of them.

"Bran span new, ain't they?" was his slow comment. "Reckon ye got 'em right from the mint, didn't ye?"

"Yes, right from the mint!" replied St. Cloud, with a laugh. "Worth double the amount of such greasy old paper you sport."

"Yes, I s'pect so. Take the old man fer a fool, don't ye? S'pose he's an ignorant old buck that ken't tell a butterfly from a grasshopper, I reckon!"

St. Cloud and Seymour exchanged glances. What did it mean?

Was their prey getting offended, or was there meaning underlying his words?

It was a question not answerable just then, for the old man slapped down the opening card of the game, rather spitefully. And the game was played through, without the exchange of a word, Uncle Tobias winning.

With a meaning smile to St. Cloud, Seymour counted out five hundred dollars, and paid the wager.

"Now, will you try a thousand?" he asked, watching the ruralite, narrowly.

St. Cloud swore roundly.

"See here, you old cuss, do you know I believe you're no countryman at all? I believe you're a card-sharp in disguise!"

"Pooh! pooh! what put that notion into your head?" was the evidently surprised reply. "I reckon you're green yourself, ef you can't tell a good honest farmer."

"Yes, a good, honest one, like yourself, for instance!" with a sneer. "Old man, I'll bet you a thousand dollars I win this game. Do you take it?"

"No, thankie; I'm content wi' five hundred. By the way, Mr. Fletcher, don't for a moment calculate old Silas Tobias is afeard o' ye, ner sich a darned fool, nuther. Reckon I've plowed enuff groun' ter kno' w'ich way sub-soil turns easiest. Yes, siree. The Tobiases, o' Cornfield Center, can show jest as good blood in their gills as enny o' the city aristocracy. I'm tellin' ye! Thar was old Governor Tobias, o' Maine, an' Tobias, the watch inventor, and Tobiases in all our great wars. An' my son, Pete, kin jest knock ther complexion offen a musketeer at fifty yards, wi' a rifle."

"Oh, hang your bragging! Five hundred's the game. Plank, old blower."

"See here, boyee, jest call less names, please."

St. Cloud growled back some inaudible response, and slammed down his first card. The game was played quickly, the Vermont winner, as usual. And game after game resulted in his favor, until he had won about three thousand dollars from the two "gentlemen" sharpers.

Then he arose with a quiet laugh, and placing the whole stack of bills upon a hearth on one side of the room, he touched a match to them, and watched them blaze up.

A cry of astonishment escaped the two sharpers. "For God's sake, man, are you crazy?" demanded Seymour, springing from his seat, with an oath.

"Oh, yes, quite crazy, without doubt," was the sarcastic reply, and then, as the Vermont turned toward them, they made a discovery.

The gray matted mass of hair was gone—lay upon the floor where it had fallen—and a white-faced, resolute man stood before them, a cocked revolver in either hand, and a gleam in his piercing eyes that meant business.

"Death-Face, the detective, by all that is living!" cried St. Cloud, cowering under the aim of the revolver, while Seymour blanched, pale with fear.

"Yes, my gay larks," replied the detective, grimly, "it is Death-Face. I have caught you, and—"

But, even before he could complete the sentence, a portion of the floor was jerked from under his feet, and he was thrown forward and precipitated head-downward!

CHAPTER IX.

A NEW CASE.

Down—down went the detective, through what seemed an endless space, and ere he stopped, insensibility had robbed him of some of the terrors of the fall. It was long hours ere he awoke, and then it was to find himself lying, bruised and sore, upon a great net in mid-air, which had so checked his downward flight as to save him from death.

With a start he roused himself, sat up with his heels dangling over the edges of the net, and gazed about him.

An upward glance explained the mystery of his fall. Far above in the floor of the third story through which he had fallen, was a large square hole, while still further above in the fourth floor was just visible the mechanical works of the trap. He was suspended on the net between the second and third floors; below him was a second square hole through which he could see to the first floor. There evidently had been an elevator there, some day, but it had been removed, and the treacherous dead-fall substituted in its place.

The distance to the second flight was nearly twenty feet, and after resting a few moments, Death-Face swung off, and made the drop. He came near going through the elevator-way, but fortune favored him in managing to avoid this new disaster.

He struck with great force, and a roar of noisy echoes ran riot through the great chambers. But on listening, he could hear no sound of his enemies' approach, which naturally produced the conclusion that they had given him up as done for.

Two doors opened out of the chamber, but both he found to be locked, so that escape was prevented in that direction. With a muttered malediction, he turned to the huge windows looking out upon the road-way, which were covered with a thick coat of cobwebs and dust.

But these, also, he found to be fastened with screws, and having no sharp instrument to remove them with, he was obliged to abandon any attempt at escape in that direction, unless he broke one of the great plate glasses, which he resolved not to do while there was any other chance.

"I wonder what's down upon the first floor?" he muttered, peering down through the opening, through which he had come so near falling.

"Deserted and dusty, like all untenanted places, I see. But I'm going down there, somehow. It appears to me there must be some show of escape in there, if anywhere. But how shall I get down?"

This was now the question. There was no stairway up into the second story, the elevator having doubtlessly been used in the days of the building's occupancy. An outside staircase of iron led to the fourth story, he remembered; it was up this he had gone with the two rascals, Seymour and St. Cloud. Ah! the remembrance of these two rogues, made a dark scowl come to the detective's face.

"Confound them, they'd just as lief kill me as not," he muttered, glancing upward. "And they are in that great counterfeit ring, too; or, still bet-

ter, are perhaps the ringleaders. Some of their bogus 'blossoms' made ashes, though. They didn't fool old Tobias so much, after all! Ha! ha!"

The next thing was to get down onto the first floor. There were no ropes nor anything to manufacture them out of, and the distance was more than twenty feet to the floor below. Which made dropping a dangerous attempt, in the least sense of the word. Yet Death-Face resolved to make the attempt, hit or miss. He had no doubts as to his fate, should his two enemies come to search for his body, and find him alive and disarmed, for his revolvers had gone away through to the bottom in his fall.

So he would try the drop, be the result what it might. And swinging downward as soon as the resolution was formed, he let go. Down—down—and then he struck upon his feet with great violence. Fortunately no bones were hurt, but he was so jarred that it took several moments to recollect where he was.

Then he proceeded to inspect the apartment, and the modes of escape therefrom. The back doors and windows were securely nailed and locked, but great was his surprise on approaching the front door to find the key on the inside of the door, and the door unlocked.

"Ha! this is lucky, by Judas. The agent has doubtless been here, and gone away without his key, which lets me out, handsomely."

And the detective stepped forth into the street, a free man!

Death-Face, or Harry Conroy, as he really was, although there were but few in the great metropolis acquainted with this fact, was the man who had once rescued Amy Elwood's runaway horses, and he had, as we have related, paid several visits to the beauty-heiress.

He had now not seen her for some time, and no sooner had he gained the street, than he formed the resolution to call upon her. But, first of all, he went to his room, in a prominent Broadway hotel, and donned another suit of clothing from the old patched farmer's attire, and when, an hour later, he rung the bell at the Elwood mansion, he was truly a fine-looking fellow, the only detriment to his personal appearance being the peculiar whiteness of his face.

A mulatto girl answered the summons, and made a humble courtesy as she beheld the noted detective, for she, of the whole household, knew of Conroy's profession.

"Good-day to you, Molly! Is Miss Elwood in? If so, will you please give her my card?" and he extended a delicately-perfumed card, upon which his name was written in a master-hand.

"Oh! de Lor, sir!" gasped the servant, the whites of her eyes growing unnaturally wide, "de missus ain't at home, sir. Done gone off widout sayin' a word to anybody. Didn't take a stitch of clothes, neither, an' dis chile is awful worried, sir. Mas'r Seymour say she gone to Cape May, but I don't b'lebe it, sir, 'deed I don't! Missus wouldn't 'a' done gone off widout takin' me, sir. I see her maid, I is!"

Conroy whistled his surprise.

"Why, this is strange. The way I remember it, Miss Elwood was not to go to Cape May until next week."

"'Deed she wasn't, sir; 'deed she wasn't. An', oh! de Lor' only knows what has become of her."

"Humph! I must look into this. It does not look just right, that's a fact. Didn't take her wardrobe, you say?"

"Not a dud, sir, but was on her back; 'deed she didn't, sir."

"Then I don't believe she went to Cape May, at all. Is this Seymour in?"

"No, sir."

"He's Miss Elwood's cousin, I believe?"

"Yes, sir."

"Were they close friends?"

"Oh! de Lor', no. Missus Amy jist despised him, sir, 'deed she did."

"Ah! this has an appetizing look. In case Miss Elwood was dead, this cousin would come in for the property, eh?"

"I s'pect so, sir; but—but—y—you—y—you—"

And Molly began to cry, in alarm.

"Hush, girl!" Conroy commanded, authoritatively. "Your mistress is all safe, I'll warrant. I'll go and hunt her up. Mind, you don't say a word of this to anybody. I'll call in the course of a few days, and see if she has not returned."

Saying which, Harry Conroy quitted the mansion.

"I don't like this a bit," he muttered, as he sauntered along Fifth avenue, reflecting upon what he had heard. "I am well satisfied that Amy is not at Cape May. Let me see; she had engaged accommodations at the Stockton, she told me. I will telegraph and find out if she is there. Seymour—Seymour. Let me think; ah! that was the name of the villain who was in company with St. Cloud, under another name. Probably the two Seymours are identical, in which case Miss Elwood's cousin is a rascal, and not above suspicion for any crime."

Death-Face did not go immediately to the nearest telegraph office, but sauntered about town, spending a considerable time in Wall street brokering establishments, watching the paper that was handled, now and then detecting a spurious note, much to the elation of the parties concerned. About evening, however, he made his way over into Broadway, and entering a Western Union office, sent a dispatch, inquiring of the clerk of the Stockton Hotel, at Cape May, if Miss Amy Elwood, of New York, was registered on their books. And ere long the reply came back:

"No such party here."

Which settled that part of it in Conroy's mind.

And thus matters stood at the end of three days, Nothing satisfactory had been learned concerning

the fates of either Celia Orwick or Amy Elwood. The cases bore resemblance to each other, in some particulars, and would have furnished the metropolis with some highly sensational news, but for the efforts of Death-Face in keeping the matter out of the ears of newspaper reporters, who occasionally beset him for matter to fill their columns. Neither Fooly Fred nor Dandy Dock had learned anything of importance, for the latter had not succeeded in gaining admission to Queen Mab's, while in his sphere among the Water street-ites, Fred had little opportunity to gather news appertaining to either of the cases.

"They're two stickers!" said Death-Face, as, with his two aids, he sat in his room in the Mulberry street tenement, the evening of the third day in question. "There is no chance of success without arresting this St. Cloud and Seymour, which I don't care to do, just yet. Ere long I hope to nab them on another tack, which will send them to Sing-Sing or Blackwell's Island, one or the other."

"Passing 'queer blossoms,' eh?" queried Dock, with a laugh. "They ain't the only guilty ones, I'm tellin' you."

"No, you are right, but this paper cannot long be handled with impunity. Why, I saw a leading city politician, who aspires to a high office in the near future, make a deposit at the Second National to-day, in which there were a couple of new fives, on the National Bank of Albany. I didn't say anything, and the receiving-teller, one of the sharpest experts in the business, ran over it, and put it on stack, without noticing the good from the bad—just because an influential citizen made the deposit. What is the country coming to, when even our best men handle the stuff without knowing when they do it?"

"I've got on the trail of a gay young lark who is 'showing the queer' in the boldest style," said Dock, chewing hard at the end of his cigar, "but who is, I believe, doing so, ignorant of his crime. I'm going to investigate as soon as the case ripens."

"Yes, keep your eyes peeled on all cases of 'showing,' because if we win we've got to work sharp, for Pinkerton's men are laying to with a will. It's going to be nip and tuck between us."

For some time they conversed upon different topics relating to their profession; but finally they were interrupted by a knock upon the door.

And a good hearty thump it was, too, made with the handle of a cane, evidently.

Fooly Fred opened the door, and admitted an elderly gentleman of rather prepossessing appearance—a man stout of figure, with a round, jovial, beardless face, pleasant black eyes, and long hair that fell in little waves down his back. He was well dressed, sported a gold-headed cane and elegant vest-chain, and altogether was somewhat dashing of make-up, for a man over whom fifty years had passed, no matter if but lightly.

"Ahem! excuse my intrusion, gentlemen, but is not this the headquarters of a detective whose pallid countenance has earned for him the name of Death-Face?"

"This is the place, sir. Be seated, sir. Boss, this gentleman wishes to see you, I believe."

"Well, sir, I am at your service," said Conroy, bringing his chair closer, and scanning his visitor critically.

"What is there I can do for you in my line of business?"

"I have a little job I wish some expert individual to undertake," was the reply, "and was recommended to you as being a good hand. These young gentlemen are all right, I dare say! With a business-like glance at Fred and Dock."

"Certainly; make your case known without hesitation, sir."

"Well, then, firstly, my name is Samuel Raynor, of Virginia City, Nevada. I am what they call a 'bonanza man' out of the States—always on the search for something new. I went West twenty years ago, and engaged in gold-mining, and have followed it for a business ever since, and during that time have never heard from the East, except by an occasional newspaper. When I left, I borrowed twenty thousand dollars capital from my brother, who had just inherited it, promising to return at the expiration of twenty years and pay it back to him or his heirs, with twenty years' simple interest at ten per cent. And I am East for that purpose, but to find that my brother is dead—and the Lord only knows where his heirs are—I don't."

"Ah! well, I must say that you are an honest man, without question," Death-Face exclaimed, while both Dock and Fred expressed their astonishment by longer pulls at their cigars. "Not one man out of every hundred, nowadays, would honor an obligation of twenty years' standing."

"Well, perhaps not; but I wish to depart from this life with a clear conscience, which I couldn't do were I to retain the mite of the orphan."

"Your resolve is very praiseworthy, at any rate. I suppose you wish to find these heirs?"

"Rather I want you to find them. Here are your figures. James Raynor lived in Mulberry street, carpenter by trade; widower by death of wife; died himself about nine or ten years ago—or maybe eight years ago, uncertain about that; left two heirs—boy and girl, twins, aged ten years. Boy entered service of baker; don't know what became of girl; boy's employer died a couple of years ago, and baker's family don't know what became of him. Boy's name Sherry Raynor; girl's, Leo. There you have it, sir, in a nutshell. Can you make anything out of it?"

"Doubtless, sir; the boy can probably be found, and will know of his sister."

"And you will undertake the case?"

"If you like, yes. I have every confidence that we can oust him out of his hiding. He is here in the

city, I think, for I think I have heard the name, though I cannot recall just the place, nor when."

"Very well, do your best, and when you find a clew, let me know. You will find me at the Fifth Avenue."

Then Mr. Samuel Raynor, of Virginia City, took his departure, leaving the detectives with another case in hand.

CHAPTER X.

AMY'S HEROISM—SHERRY'S TROUBLE.

WE will, for a short space of time, look in upon those unfortunate females of Dr. Heidle's asylum for the insane, though probably his doors were never darkened by those who were in the least deranged. His patients were all deranged in a mild way, he was wont to say to his intimate acquaintances, with one of his evil little laughs.

But of the fifteen women, young and old, who occupied that prison in the third story of the asylum, not one was there in the least unsound in mind.

Amy Elwood was, for the first two or three days, very sick, doubtless owing to the violence of her grief and excitement on finding herself duped and the prisoner of Clarence Seymour. But, the kind care of her sisters in durance had nursed her back to health and strength, and now it was a month since her imprisonment. August, with its dry, scorching heat, had gone, and September, with its milder breath and occasional breezes, was at hand, a little more cheering to the prisoners. And although their confinement was terrible and chafing to the spirit, none of them could complain of harsh or cruel treatment, or lack of food.

There was an excellent opportunity offered here for the study of character. Some of the inmates were sullen and uncommunicative, while others were as gay and light-hearted as though they had possession of their freedom and liberty. And among this latter class was a girl whom Amy took an instant fancy to—a girl of seventeen or eighteen years, very pretty in face and figure, and of great vivacity of spirit.

"My name is—well, say Annie Boyce, dear!" she said, one day, approaching Amy, as she stood at the stained-glass windows, and tried to peer out onto the avenue, while tears coursed down her cheeks. "Don't cry, sweet sister, for it only leaves you the worse off. I have been here two years, and never shed a tear, because I trust in God, and know I shall some day be released from this terrible bondage."

"Oh! I could not live in this terrible prison that long, I know," Amy sobbed, piteously. "I should die, I know I should."

"Not if you keep up spirits. Only one died here since I came here, and she was an old woman—old Aunt Hodge we called her. Her son-in-law shut her up here to get possession of her house, the villain."

"Oh! how cruel."

"Yes, but that case is only a tithe as bad as some we have. Men are for the most part heartless wretches not fit to breathe the atmosphere of life."

"But, there are some good men, and bad women, also, Annie."

"Yes, I suppose so. This life is made up of good, bad, and indifferent."

"What were you put in here for?"

"Oh! I found out a secret, by accident, which threatened to ruin the prospects of a couple of men, and they took care that I shouldn't betray them by incriminating me here. But, by the faith of God, if I ever do get free, the world shall be shown one gigantic fraud, at least."

"Have you made any attempts to escape, Annie?"

"No, for they would be useless. You see the windows are securely barred, and a guard is constantly stationed outside, in the entrance, yonder. It would be a vain attempt, and we should only receive harsher treatment."

"Maybe you are right. But I do not intend to remain here without making a trial for our liberty!" said Amy, drying her tears, and there shone a resolute light in her eyes. "I am going to open communication with the outer world at last."

"But, you will not dare to break a window, dear. We have tried it several times, but the guard cursed so terribly that we had to desist."

"He'll not hear me," replied Amy, quietly. "Get me a piece of paper and a pencil, first, and I'll get a message in readiness, so I can drop it out as soon as I make an opening."

The prison was furnished with a few books, and Annie having her own pencil, wrote on slips of the fly leaf from one of the books, the following:

"Help! help! Fifteen girls are confined in the upper story of this building, which is a so-called private mad-house. Notify the authorities, or assist us to escape, for the love of God, I pray you."

AMY ELWOOD.

"There! that will procure our liberty, I am certain, if it only chances to fall into the right hands," said Amy, as she finished her task. "Now for the window."

She approached one of the immense stained-glass windows, and examined it closely, eagerly watched by her anxious companions. The glass was heavier than she had at first supposed and a fear assailed her that her efforts were destined to be futile.

But she could try, at least.

Drawing a solitary diamond ring from her little finger, she pressed the gem to the glass, and drew a large circle. The diamond cut a deep track through the smooth surface.

"Good! Now give me a stick, or something I can use noiselessly!" Amy cried, excitedly, and the other females began to share her enthusiasm. But at this juncture the door opened, and the guard came tramping into the room, with a muttered curse.

He was a great brawny, murderous-looking fellow, with bleared eyes and bloated face, and tangled black hair and beard. And to the alarm of the trembling women, he carried a heavy black-snake whip in his hand, which he cracked with meaning significance.

"Hulloa!" he cried, glaring at the frightened prisoners with apparent fury. "I heard a 'spicious noise in heer. Maybe some o' ye mis'er'ble squaws'd be pleased to tell me what it was?"

There was no answer, for none of the women were inclined to betray their last hope of escape, even had they possessed the power of speech which they did not, in their terror. And their silence seemed to more enrage their jailer.

"Come! curse you, speak up!" he ordered, drawing nearer, a wolfish gleam in his eyes. "I'm goin' ter know what made that noise, or by—"

He did not finish the sentence, but raising his ugly instrument of torture, brought it down with stinging force around a lady's shoulders. With a pained cry the poor creature staggered back, and would have fallen, had not Annie Boyce caught her in her arms.

"You ugly brute!" cried Amy Elwood, springing forward, her eyes flashing and her whole form quivering—"you mean, cowardly wretch, to strike a defenseless woman!"

She sprung a pace nearer, and with a bold dash caught hold of the whip, to which she hung with all her might.

"At him, girls! Hold him, quick, while I flog him!" she cried, bravely, resolution expressed upon her face.

The ruffian swore furiously, and made a fierce effort to tear loose, but eight of the prisoners laid hold of him, with sudden determination, and he was borne to the floor, and held there as in a vise.

Then, Amy wrenched the cruel whip from his grasp, and raising it repeatedly, brought it down with all her might across his back, which was only covered by a thin cotton shirt.

Howls of rage and oaths of the most horrible character escaped the man, as Amy continued to ply the gad to the best of her ability. And when she had exhausted her strength, Annie Boyce took her place, and the inhuman jailer was flogged until he begged piteously for quarter.

Then he was dragged out into the outer entry and left there, while the girls retreated into their prison and locked the door after them, taking care to retain possession of the whip as a weapon of defense.

No further molestation was offered them that day, but Amy did not again attempt to break the glass. She was too fearful of being caught in the act, and having her plans frustrated. She hid her messages under the carpet and bided her time.

The next morning, however, she began her second attack upon the window, and by careful labor soon succeeded in dislodging the circular piece of glass.

Then she thrust out her messages, and the wind wafted them away.

"Now, we can wait and hope," the brave girl said; "so cheer up, sisters; liberty will soon be ours!"

In the meantime, the metropolitan circles, while being agitated over the success of the great counterfeited ring, and the Boss Tweed sensation, was not blind to the extraordinary doings of a modern Coal Oil Johnnie, who was no other person, than Sherry Raynor.

We have passed over some of the features of his gay, reckless career, thinking that it would be more to his future credit. As the original Coal Oil Johnnie sowed his money to the wind, and led a wild, reckless existence, so did Sherry Raynor follow in his footsteps, until, eventually, at the end of one month, he was penniless, and turned for comfort to Charley Evans, who had followed his fortunes from the beginning to the end.

It was a miserably wet, disagreeable summer night, when the two youths sat together in their parlor at the Fifth Avenue, which overlooked Madison square, finishing a bottle of wine, which the last five-dollar note of Raynor had paid for, a few moments previous.

A month of this roystering had greatly changed Sherry. He was paler and less vivacious, and a hunted, hungry expression ever haunted his unnaturally bright eyes.

All that was to be seen for money in the great metropolis, he had seen, and Evans had been his constant companion, sharing his joys and sorrows like a brother. A strange youth, Sherry thought him, sometimes, but withal a jolly good companion.

And as they sat facing each other, to-night, with the September rain dashing against the window-panes, Sherry Raynor said:

"Evans, how much had I when I left the streets and began this life?"

"Two thousand dollars, old boy."

"Two thousand? Great Heaven, can it be possible that I have let that amount slip through my fingers?"

"Yes, and two thousand more with it, which, lucky dog that you are, you won from the gaming-table. Twice two thousand, in all!"

"My God, is it possible I have been such a fool. Four thousand dollars in a month? By heaven, it seems incredible!"

"But is nevertheless true; and that is not the worst of it, Sherry."

"Not the worst of it? No, I am aware it is not. I have been a fool. But to what do you refer?"

"I hardly dare tell you, pard, for it will be a great shock," Evans said, puffing away slowly at his cigar.

"Indeed, I knew nothing of it until to-day, when I read a piece in the *Herald*. Sherry, you are a hunted criminal!"

"A what!" the astonished youth demanded, starting to his feet, his pale face growing whiter, and his hands involuntarily clenching. "I a criminal, Evans—!"

"Yes, you, Sherry, and now that I see what trouble threatens you, I am sorry that you ever got that money."

"It's about the money, then?" he gasped, sinking back into the chair, and pouring out the last drop of wine from the decanter.

"Yes, about the money. It seems a criminal has made a confession, upon his prison death-bed, which involves you. His name was Faro Phil. He was arrested when suspected of having in his possession a large amount of counterfeit money. The money was not found, but he had enough other crimes against him to send him up for ninety days. And he has died, swearing that the night of his arrest he was in possession of two thousand dollars in counterfeit money, belonging to the Ring, which he was to circulate through the West. But, it seems he got chased by Death-Face, the detective, in disguise, and on the ferry-boat met you."

"He told you his troubles, and you offered to purchase the 'blossoms' at ten cents on a dollar, which was accepted, and the transfer made. You slid off with the queer, and he slid into the hands of the cops. And, Sherry, boy, you've been squandering that money boldly and recklessly here in the heart of New York city!"

The young man covered his face with his hands, and groaned aloud. This was a terrible blow to him. Unconsciously he had been passing counterfeit money, and now this death charge of Faro Phil had forever sealed his fate. He was an outlaw, in one sense of the word—would be sought for, high and low, and no protestations of innocence from him could possibly better his case, after the damning confession of Faro Phil. It was either to be an unconditional surrender, and submit to years of servitude on Blackwell's Island, or flight and a hunted life.

Ah! which would be the better?

It was some time before the youth spoke, and then it was in low and husky tones.

"I am glad it's gone, Evans," he said, staring thoughtfully at his companion, and then rising and going to the window, looking on the avenue.

"Blame will come to me, but not for the world would I handle the stuff again. Besides, I have learned a lesson, by this experience. I am no longer a boy, but see with the eyes of a man. Good-by, old boy; I am going to hunt up Alec. She can hide me."

"You are not going near Alec," Evans said, firmly. "The girl is well enough in her way, but you have better friends in your dark hour than even she. Have you forgotten Fay?"

"Fay? Fay? No; heaven be praised! I still remember her, though my brain has hardly been straight for a month. You promised to take me to her, Charley, you know."

"Yes, I promised to take you, and we're going now. But we must go in disguises, which I have thoughtfully procured."

Half an hour later two middle-aged men left the hotel, and hurried down Broadway through the wet night as fast as possible.

"As I thought!" said one to the other; "the hotel is watched. Two of Pinkerton's men stood in the entrance as we came out, and—" with a backward glance. "Great Heaven! Sherry, they are following close in our rear, as I'm a live man. Come! faster, or we are lost—I as well as you!"

CHAPTER XI.

FRED CATCHES A CLEW—DODGING

On the same wet, rainy night into the darkness of which the flickering glare of the street lamps scarcely penetrated, Tom McDonald's "Arms" in Mulberry street, was more than crowded with the patrons from the immediate neighborhood, whose broad brogue betrayed the accent of the Emerald sod. Then there were a few Englishmen, and a scattering of native Americans; in fact, Tom's place was a well known resort for anybody who had ten cents to leave with him, in exchange for liquid fire.

Also, it was a resort for that low order of sporting men, whose pugilistic barbarities occasionally shock the public—prize-fighters, cock-fighters and dog-fighters, of which New York and Philadelphia have an over-supply.

In McDonald's establishment were little back-parlors, into which privileged ones were admitted, and where business could be transacted in private.

In one of these apartments, sitting opposite each other at a round deal table, on which were liberal glasses of ale, were two men, this evening of which we write. They were evidently there for the purpose of enjoying a social glass, judging from the delight with which they quaffed the cherry liquid—the Englishman's favorite drink.

But after they had emptied the goblets, they sat gazing at each other a few moments, as if each were waiting for the other to speak.

Both were large, brawny men, past middle-age in life, with *whisky* well written upon their coarse faces and in their haggard eyes. Roughly dressed, and evil of appearance, they were such men as might be selected for dark work upon just such dark, wet nights as this, when the metropolises between the two rivers was enveloped in a dense fog, and the rain fell in fitful showers.

Outside of the little "parlor," in the saloon were heard the shouts of drunken men; maudlin songs and ribald jokes and oaths, and the two men exchanged glances.

"Tom's reaping a big harvest," said one, with a nod. "He is the b'y ter fetch in the honest coppers, bedad!"

"Oh! he'll get rich, never fear," was the reply.

"But, where's our man? Why don't he come?"

"Oh! he'll be comin', never fear, Durg. His secret is worth too much to him, for him to run any risks."

"Yes, I think you're right, Curley," with a grim laugh. "He knows the gal—"

"Sh!" cautioned Curley, with an apprehensive glance toward a neighboring corner, where, upon a heap of old blankets, a youthful figure was cuddled, an expression of repose upon the dirt-begrimed features.

"Oh! you needn't have no fear of him," said Durg, with a laugh. "That's Fooly Fred, the idiot. Don't know enough ter keep him over night. Drunk now, I presume, as he generally is. Fred! I say, Fred!"

But there was no response to the call. Fooly Fred was evidently in dreamland, or else too drunk to answer. He was a devoted habitue of the saloons along Mulberry and other like streets, and not a few harbored him, because he was known to be good at lending a hand if wanted.

"Well, maybe he's all right," accepted Curley, partly satisfied. "Ah! here comes Mr. St. Cloud, now."

As he spoke, a man was admitted into their presence by the barkeeper, after which the door was again locked. The new-comer was indeed Ned St. Cloud, whom we have met before. There was an angry scowl upon his dark face as he saw the two men by the table, and Durg motioned him to a seat by the board.

"Well?" St. Cloud interrogated, eying his two men coolly, not a trace of fear expressed in either tone or looks. "I am here, you see; now, what the devil is to pay?"

"A good deal, Mr. St. Cloud," Durg replied, with a bland smile. "We write you a letter saying we wanted ter see ye on important business, relating to Celia Orwick, I reckon. You were not slow to come, w'en ye found somebody knew sumthin' about the gal, aside's from you, eh?"

"What do you know about her?" demanded St. Cloud, fiercely, as he leaned forward across the table, a very devil gleaming in his eyes. "What do you know about her?"

"Sufficient ter send you ter Sing-Sing, or, maybe, hang ye!" was the reply.

"Pooh! you cannot scare me. What have I done that I should fear your power, pray tell me?"

"Oh! you're a gay rooster, ain't ye? I reckon you imagine we brought you here for the fun o' the thing, which ain't the case at all. We mean business, Mr. St. Cloud, an' the sooner ye order up the drinks, the better it'll be for all concerned—eh, Curley?"

"Fo' snah!" replied Curley, with plantation accent. "De massa pays de bill."

"Well, order the drinks, then, and I'll pay for them," growled St. Cloud, throwing some coin down upon the table. "Then, say what you have to say in a hurry."

"S'pose you have important business, elsewhere, hey?"

"That matters not to you. What do you know of Celia Orwick?"

"Considerable, more or less. S'posed you should wake up sum night, w' yer room in darkness, an' her a-layin' in a coffin by yer bedside, w' her white face and staring eyes turned accusingly toward you?"

"Or find her head mounted upon the mantelpiece, a-grinnin' at ye w' horrible grotesqueness!" added Curley, with a chuckle.

St. Cloud shuddered violently, at the terrible pictures. He had nightly dreamed of such things, of late, and the subject of Celia Orwick's death was too repulsive and horrible for his meditation.

"What do you mean by all this nonsense, you fools?" he gasped, whitening. "I do not understand."

"You don't? Well, we'll try to make you. Understand, then, that we were at hand when you tried but failed to choke the life out of the gal."

"Failed!" St. Cloud grew whiter still. "You don't mean to say she is alive?"

"Alive and well, sir; but a close prisoner in the power of yours, truly, Durg and Curley. Yes, my gay St. Cloud, the gal is well, but the child is dead, and you will be held responsible!"

"Bah! you cannot frighten me with any of your humbug. If the babe is dead, so much the better. She cannot make me marry her."

"But she can, though, for the brat isn't dead at all, but lively as a cricket," chuckled Curley. "So ye see ye're in a box, yit, my gay rooster."

"The case is," said Durg, lighting his pipe. "We, Durg and Curley, turn in a penny, occasionally, by doing odd jobs in the park. We see'd you choke the gal—heard what passed between you and as soon as you were gone, we ran in an' tried to fetch her back, an' succeeded, though it was a pretty hard case o' strangulation. After it were dark enough, we smuggled her out o' the park, and to our boardin' house in Wooster street, where, a week later, she gave birth to a child, a little girl, the very picture of its mamma. She told us her story, and asked us to keep her till she was able to work, w'ich we have did; an' now, heer we air, askin' you what ye think about it?"

"I think it's a piece of high-handed villainy, all around," St. Cloud said, with a quiet laugh. "You've got the girl and may keep her—I don't want her!"

"Oh! ain't you kind?" was the sarcastic response; then both men laughed, evilly.

"Reckon you don't know us. Better you call

around at number—Wooster street inside of ten days, or we'll let the gal loose on you."

Then Messrs. Durg and Curley arose to depart, and St. Cloud did likewise.

"I'll come around," he said, as they passed out into the saloon. "And in case I should—"

"In case you want the gal done entirely away with, stick a hundred-dollar bill under the nose of your humble servant, an' you'll never be troubled, I'll guarantee."

Then, they separated, St. Cloud going out into the street, and Messrs. Durg and Curley pausing at the bar to replenish with sparkling ale.

Half an hour later, Fooly Fred made his way cautiously from the saloon, and out into the rainy night, a glimmer of satisfaction in his eyes.

"So much for playing the fool!" he muttered, as he hurried along. "I have at last got on the track of the girl, and now it only remains to put Dock Raymond in search of her to complete the job. And when Miss Nelly finds who was instrumental in finding her sister, maybe a young chap of about my figure won't be left clear out in the cold. Gad, but the fair Nelly meets my views, precisely."

It was as Evans said.

Two muffled figures were hurrying along, not far behind them, evidently in pursuit, since the youth recognized them as two of Pinkerton's detectives.

"What in thunder shall we do?" demanded Sherry, breathlessly, for the thought of arrest under the charges against him was horrible.

"We've got to work our best cards, old boy," Evans replied, quickening his pace. "Don't look back or the devils will suspect that we scent them. Come on—swiftly; watch me, and do as I do, in every particular."

They hurried on, with all rapidity practicable, Evans keeping a watch in the rear and in the front, showing himself to be an adept at dodging.

He was swift of foot and quick to move, and it was about all Sherry could do to keep track of him.

After going several blocks, they crossed over to the opposite side of Broadway, and continued on. The pursuing detectives followed their example.

"It's us they're after, without doubt," Evans said, grimly. "But I don't see why they don't catch up with us, and make the arrest. That's what puzzles me, you know. But Death-Face would make mighty short work of our little case."

"You know him, then?"

"By sight; he is the best man on the force, to-day. Here! quick! come in," and Sherry was pulled into a grand saloon, which he had never visited before. Following in the steps of Evans, who nodded familiarly to the barkeeper, they passed into the parlor at the rear, and Evans called for a bottle of champagne, which was brought with accompanying glasses.

"Now, make yourself at home and appear as much at ease as possible," was the injunction to Sherry. "Ah! as I thought, here the ducks come."

For the two detectives were seen entering the parlors at this moment. Both of the youths trembled in their shoes, for they expected nothing else but what they would be arrested.

But to their surprise, the 'shadows' took possession of another table, and called for wine.

"They suspect us in this old man disguise, but yet are afraid to tackle us, for I closely resemble a certain notable politician's son," Evans said, in a low tone. Then he began a brisk conversation on the questions of the day, putting forth in strong and effective language ideas that would have done credit to an educated politician of older years.

Sherry put in a word occasionally, expressing his views, and the general tone of their conversation was such as might be heard in a club-room any day of the campaign term.

And both Evans and Sherry were aware that their auditors were listening intently to every word, although they kept up a desultory run of talk, uninteresting to themselves and others who heard it.

"Oh! hum; where shall we go—home?" finally exclaimed Evans, with a tremendous yawn. "I suppose you start back for Chicago in the morning, eh? or will you stop over with me? I expect the Governor to tea, to-morrow eve, and I would like you to be present."

"Perhaps I will stop over another day," replied Sherry, loud enough to be heard by the detectives. "My business is not imperative. But come, you promised to show me some of the sights, to-night! where are they?"

"That's so; we must look into some of the places, as promised."

They rose and left the saloon, Evans paying for the champagne at the bar. Once out into Broadway, Evans led the way toward Fulton street at a rapid walk, occasionally looking back to see if they were followed.

Sure enough, the detectives were coming on behind, as usual, quickening their speed with that of the fugitives, or in other words keeping about such a distance between them and their prey, as would not allow of their escaping should they attempt to.

"They are coming, eh?" Sherry queried, with a bitterness in his tone that meant the two opposites—defiance and repentance.

"Yes, hang them. I think I know their game. They have a suspicion that we are connected with this great counterfeiting ring, and propose to shadow us and thereby discover where the bogus money is manufactured. But, I'll wing them on that calculation. This way, Sherry!"

They turned into a narrow by-street, where the lamp-lights were few and far between, and darkness was consequently thicker. Evans led the way with a firm ringing step, and Sherry dogged close at his heels. The street was flanked by old brick tene-

ments, and the drizzling rain caused a sickening stench to rise from the gutters.

On—on, they hastened, their breath coming and in pants.

Behind them could be heard the footsteps of their persevering pursuers. They were bound not to lose the game even though they faced fire.

On—on; then Evans pulled Sherry up a pair of marble steps, and jerked spitefully at the door-bell. "It's a notorious bagnio," he explained, "but I know the door-keeper, and we can escape to the next street."

The door was opened by a pretty young lady, not yet out of her teens.

"It's me, Kitty!" Evans said, hurriedly. "The men of Pinkerton's agency are after us; for God's sake let us in, and guide us through to the next street!"

The girl nodded, and Evans and Sherry stepped inside, after which she bolted the door, and signified for them to follow her.

Which they did. She led the way through several brilliantly lighted and gorgeously furnished parlors, where males and females were sitting either at card or wine-tables, then through a kitchen into a back court-yard, out of which a covered way led to the street beyond.

Here Kitty left them, and Evans plunged into the dark passage, Sherry following blindly, for he was trusting all in his companion's guidance. Presently they emerged into another narrow thoroughfare, and as they did so, came face to face with the very ones they were trying to evade—the two "shadow" detectives!

CHAPTER XII.

HUNTING AROUND THE BUSH—FAY.

Is the meantime, Death-Face, leaving his other business in charge of his two aids, was prosecuting his search for the missing Amy Elwood.

Nearly a month had now passed since his first discovery of her strange absence, during which time he had been on the watch and wait, incessantly.

He had telegraphed to the Cape, Long Branch, and all the principal watering-places inland and upon the coast, without learning of her the least tidings by which to base his search. He went every few days and talked with the maid, Molly, but as yet the household knew nothing concerning their fair mistress. It was the third case that had "stuck" the bold detective—first, the great Counterfeit Ring; second, the mystery of the whereabouts of Celia Orwick; third, the mystery of the whereabouts of Amy Elwood, the young heiress.

Her absence, the detective found, gave little rise to remark among the circles in which she was wont to move, for the season out-of-town was prolonged this year on account of the extreme length of the heated term.

But when autumn advanced, he knew there would be more inquiry, and ere that time he meant to find her if such were a possible thing.

On the day of the evening on which Folly Fred overheard the conversation between St. Cloud and Messrs. Durg and Curley, Death-Face, while sauntering up Broadway, espied Clarence Seymour, Amy's villainous cousin, standing at the corner of Fifth avenue and Broadway, in conversation, with a portly, elderly individual, with gold eye-glasses, and an immense paunch.

"Ha!" the detective muttered, instantaneously halting, and making pretense of gazing into a store window. "There is the Seymour party at last. He has kept pretty shady since that murderous attempt to break my neck from the club-room trap. Who is that old rosbud he is talking with? I have seen him somewhere—in the police court, I guess—but cannot recall his name. But, I'll wager he is an old rogue, so I'll remember him. That Seymour must tell me something concerning the present whereabouts of Miss Elwood when he gets done with the portly chap."

And accordingly the detective loitered along at the show windows, keeping an eye upon the two men at the corner, bound that they should not elude his vigilance.

Fully fifteen minutes elapsed ere the portly man turned on up the avenue, while Seymour came on down Broadway, at a rapid gait. When just about opposite, Death-Face stepped forward and intercepted him.

"Hold up, Mr. Seymour," he said, in his undeny tone of command, which so few cared to disobey. "Don't be in a hurry, for I wish to speak with you."

"Seymour?" was the reply, as the young man came to a halt. "That is not my name."

"Oh! isn't it? Well, maybe I know something about that myself. Your genuine name is supposed to be Clarence Seymour, of No. — Fifth avenue. I am, as you well know, called Death-Face, the detective."

"Ahem! yes, I believe I have read of you. Admitting that my name is really Seymour, what do you want of me, sir—you, a detective?"

"I want to know where your cousin, Miss Elwood, is."

"Oh, you do, do you? Well, you are destined to have your desires ungratified for the present, then?"

"Am I? You won't tell me?"

"Certainly not, because I don't know. If I did, what business is it to you?"

"A great deal of business. Amy Elwood is my betrothed wife."

If there was no truth in this declaration, Death-Face thought it might affect his auditor, and so it did. He flushed angrily, and a steely glitter came into his eyes.

"I know nothing of her. I supposed her to be in Cape May at first, but a telegram proved that I was

wrong, and therefore I know as little where she is as you do, and am greatly distressed."

"Without doubt," Death-Face said, in his dry, sarcastic way. "If she were never to come back, however, you would be rejoiced—would not be financially distressed, that is?"

"What do you mean, sir, by your insinuations?" cried Seymour, hotly. "Your insolence is unpardonable!"

"You seem to tumble to my meaning pretty straight," the detective laughed, quietly. "Or, if you want your whisky straighter yet, why, I believe you do know just where Miss Elwood is; moreover, that you have got her imprisoned somewhere, while you are squandering her wealth. Ha! ha! The hammer gave the nail a hard hit that time, didn't it, you rosebud?" for Seymour had colored as red as a rose, under the truthful accusation of the detective.

But he mastered his agitation in an instant, and laughed, coolly and mockingly.

"Your imagination is very strong but floats in the wrong current of atmosphere," he observed, twirling his cane, jauntily. "I have no such schemes against my fair cousin's property and welfare. It is a great mystery to me what has become of her?"

"And a mystery to me, and soon will be a mystery to the public, when suspicion will point toward you. So you will do well to tell me where she is."

"Look for angel Gabriel to blow his trumpet when I do, that's all," replied Seymour.

"But you must—shall!" Death-Face said, laying one hand upon the young swell's shoulder, "or I shall put you under arrest, and take you to the nearest station-house, charged with trying to kill me, and with passing counterfeit money."

"Go ahead, then. All you'll realize will be my confinement on the island, for a few months. For you can gain nothing in regard to your unwarranted suspicions of my abducting Miss Elwood. If you will glance in the *Herald* of to-day, you will see that I have offered five hundred dollars for information of Miss Amy Elwood, who mysteriously left her home in August. I should not be apt to advertise for her, if I did not desire her return."

"If you didn't desire to blind the people," corrected Death-Face.

"Well, have it as you will; I don't care a fig whether you arrest me or not."

"In which case I shall not arrest you," Death-Face replied, releasing his hold. "You can go free for a few days, until I mature my plans, but you need not attempt to escape from the city, as that will precipitate your arrest, for henceforth you will be continually shadowed. The same advice will apply to the case of your worthy companion-in-arms, St. Cloud. The government wants a couple of expert handlers of the 'queer' like you and he, and your attempt to escape will instantly supply the want."

"Oh! don't you fear that I shall make the least attempt to get out of your reach," Seymour sneered, contemptuously. "I am not so badly scared."

"As you will be when the Ring's headquarters are raided, and a few millions' worth of bogus paper destroyed. Then the sky will look dark for you and Cloud."

"So you say. But, when you find out anything interesting in either case, just call around and let me know, will you? I shall be pleased to see you at any time."

And then the young villain turned on his heel, and strode briskly away, up Broadway.

Death-Face watched him a few moments, then sauntered off, reflecting on the foregoing conversation.

"I am more positive than ever that he has Miss Elwood shut up somewhere now," he muttered, "but it will be useless for me to attempt to find out where by quizzing him. He would die before he would tell. I shall have to let the matter drop, until some new light is thrown upon it."

That afternoon, however, he was destined to receive a clue to the mystery.

In passing along Third avenue, in front of Doctor Heidle's private asylum, a small-sized shower, composed of bits of white paper, came down from above, alighting upon his coat and hat.

"Hello! Bridget has found a new method of disposing of the dirt," he muttered, in disgust, brushing off the papers, which clung to him. But, while thus engaged, he noticed that some of the slips had writing upon one side, and curiosity prompted him to glance at the contents of one or more. What he read was a startling bit of news to him. Each paper on examination proved to contain the same message, namely:

"This is Doctor Heidle's private mad-house. Nearly a score of unfortunate women are imprisoned here, who are not insane, but perfectly rational. Help us out of this living tomb, for the love of God!"

"AMY ELWOOD."

Sherry uttered a fierce cry, as he beheld the two detectives, whom they had been trying so hard to elude, and making a forward spring, he struck one of them a blow upon the forehead that dropped him to the pavement, from which he rolled into the gutter, insensible.

The other fellow drew a rattle, and would have sprung it, had not Evans adopted Sherry's example, and rendered him silent and useless for a few moments, during which the boys took good care to leave the neighborhood, with all speed possible.

For fear that other of Pinkerton's men might be on the watch for them, they still retained their disguises, and hurried through the damp, drizzling streets, which the lamp-lights very dimly illuminated.

"We've shook the ghost now, for a time at least," Evans said, his tone more spirited. "We will go and

see my sister, Fay, and find a place to coop down, until this blows over sufficiently to admit of our escape from the city."

Presently they took a cab, Evans giving the directions and paying the fare, for he was not yet broke. He generally seemed to have plenty of cash.

He was an expert gambler, and most always had good luck in games of chance, the faro-table being his best friend.

Through the foggy streets whirled the cab at a lively rate of speed, yet it seemed an interminable space of time to Sherry ere the vehicle stopped and deposited them in a little but wonderfully clean street, running east and west. It was out near the suburbs, and more quiet and retired.

Evans rung the bell of one of a row of neat little two-story buildings, with painted shutters and walnut door. Then, they waited upon the steps.

"Shouldn't wonder if Fay's abed and asleep," Evans said, giving the bell another jerk. "She generally retires early, unless she has extra work."

"What is her occupation?" Sherry ventured to ask, partly forgetting his own troubles as the memory of the little roguish beauty he had met on the boat came back to him afresh, causing his heart to beat faster. In his month of reckless life he had associated with various women, but of them all none had the power to thrill him as the thoughts of Fay did—not even Alea, whom at first he had imagined he loved. Alea was beautiful, virtuous, and a female gambler; Fay pretty—and that was all he knew about her. But he felt in her was centered his destiny, should he meet her.

"Fay is a pretty little dressmaker!" replied Evans, with a little laugh; "and as good as she is pretty. Ah! here we have her now," as the door was thrown open, and a young lady, pretty in form and every feature, was revealed in the light of the hall chandelier.

For a moment all was silence, but the moment Evans removed his false beard, Fay sprang forward with a delighted cry, and was folded in the young man's embrace.

"Oh! Charley, you naughty, naughty boy! how you frightened me in that odious disguise. I thought of a hundred horrible things in a moment—murder, thieves, fire, and—"

"Didn't hit the right appellation, dear. But come inside; I suppose you can keep us. This is my friend, Sherry Raynor, Fay—also in disguise. Off with the whiskers, Sherry, and follow our lead."

And, when they were in an inexpensively but neatly-furnished little parlor, where the gaslight shed a soft, mellow radiance over all, Sherry got a better glimpse of Fay—his Fay, as he had oftentimes secretly called her.

She was a prepossessing and prettily-formed girl of seventeen, or thereabouts, neither slender nor stout, but of medium height and development, graceful, lithe and supple—reminding one of a happy, healthful school-girl.

Her face was just that same pretty face that had so impressed him two years before, when he had lost his maiden-love on the Fulton ferry-boat—a face of roguish sweetness, with dancing hazel eyes, and long, waving hair, that fell below a faultless waist. She was attired in a loose, flowing wrapper, which had evidently been hastily thrown on, yet she looked tenfold more charming to Sherry than though she had been clad to perfection in silks and lace.

"Here we are safe and dry," Charley Evans cried, giving his sister another hug, and then stretching himself upon a couch. "Off with the false beard, Sherry, and make yourself at home, for we're liable to have to make this our home, until the row blows over."

"What row, Charley?" Fay asked, anxiously, turning to him.

"Oh! the police—or, rather the detectives—want us for unknowingly having counterfeit money. So we'll have to lie low here, and the first chance that offers, slide out of town. Don't get scared though, for no harm shall come to you, sis—or to us, for that matter. But, look, Sherry has off his whiskers; see if you recognize him."

Fay turned toward Sherry with an inquiring glance, and gazed at him intently, a moment.

"No!" she said, at last, reflectively, "I do not recognize you, Mr. Raynor, as any one I have ever met."

"Then it isn't a case of love on both sides, after all," laughed Charley, from the sofa, "for they say love never forgets. I reckoned you were forever gone, sis, after that ferry-boat affair—"

Fay's cheeks crimsoned prettily, and a strange light gleamed from her eyes.

"It cannot be possible that—" she began; then suddenly stopped, in confusion.

"Yes, Miss Evans, it can be possible," Sherry laughingly replied, advancing and extending his hand. "That I am the hero and you the heroine of that ferry-boat caprice. Here is the little note, now."

And as Fay warmly clasped one of his hands in both of hers, he produced from his vest pocket a little strip of soiled, torn paper, on which was traced, in a delicate hand, the name that Sherry had always remembered—Fay.

"Oh, yes, that proves your identity," she cried, seizing the token, and putting it to her lips. "But, I'd never have known you, you've changed so."

But Sherry felt sure that he would have recognized her pretty self among a thousand, at the Antipodes.

CHAPTER XIII.

FAY'S HOME—DANGER—DETECTIVES.

THAT night was one of the happiest Sherry had ever experienced. Fay was a gay, vivacious creature, witty, intelligent and sensible; fairly educated, and a good conversationalist; she made the most agreeable of companions.

Evans also occasionally put in a few words, but mainly the effort of entertaining Sherry was left to Fay, while he puffed at his cigar, an intent listener; and, as for Sherry, he could have asked for no more charming an entertainer than the pretty Fay, with all her artlessness, and confiding disposition.

Just such a little woman as she Sherry decided would make him a good wife—one whom he could love, honor and trust.

He looked at things different, now. His past month of wild, fast life had developed an older head upon him, and had created a wise, far-seeing young man out of a gay, idle youth.

But he forgot his troubles in the company of pretty Fay—forgot that he was a hunted criminal—forgot all, except that he was in her fascinating presence, and she was weaving a blissful spell around him for which there was but one word of explanation—love.

And if this was really love, he little marveled at the amount of crime committed for this exquisitely blissful boon.

"I don't know what ever made me give you that slip of paper, on board the boat," Fay said, seating herself upon the sofa beside him, after Charley had gone off rummaging after something to eat, in the pantry. "I saw your face and was favorably impressed with it—and, then, you know, I was only fifteen, at that time, and wild and rattle-brained, like most girls of my age. I am sure you will excuse me for that little caprice, and think no more of it."

"I'll excuse you, certainly, if there is anything to excuse, but I can never forget that little incident, for it opened up to me a glimpse of paradise I had never aspired to before. I was a thoughtless, devil-may-care boy of the streets then, and never considered the girls of much account—barely noticed, and rather shunned them, in fact. But after I caught the glimpse of your pretty face, Miss Fay, upon the Fulton Ferry, and the sly pressure of your hand, then was that vision of future paradise presented—then did my first boyish love begin."

"Oh! Mr. Raynor, you don't really mean to tell me that you fell in love with poor me?"

"I mean just that, Fay, and I have loved you ever since, just as I do now."

His voice betrayed how sincere he was in his declaration, yet Fay shrunk away and rose quickly to her feet, as he would have drawn her closely to him.

"No, Mr. Raynor, we are not lovers, yet," she said, slightly haughty in tone. "We can be friends, though, just the same."

Then she resumed her former seat, just as Evans came in bearing a plate of rosy-cheeked apples, and a pitcher and glasses.

"Who says this isn't a provident district?" he laughed, first passing around the apples, and then pouring out three brimming glasses of cider.

"Here's to our mutual success through life, my friend, and peace and good will toward men—and all pretty young ladies!"

"Oh! Charley! just as if the old ladies weren't as good to be included, as us young ones?"

"Well, we won't dispute about that, sis; this was a party toast. Eh? Sherry, how do you like the cider?"

"Give me it in preference of all other drinks, save water!" replied Sherry, enthusiastically, for the cider was but recently made, fresh, sweet and wonderfully delicious of flavor.

"It is a capital thing to drink when one is too sweet," said Fay, gravely, yet Sherry caught a roguish glitter in her glance, and a meaning underlying her words, and a flush of mortification and anger darted across his countenance.

"I've made myself ridiculous in her sight," he muttered under his breath, biting his lip. "Confound it, she shall not have cause to twit me of sweetness, very soon again."

And Sherry meant it, too.

Charley observed the cut, and very suddenly poured out another glass of cider, that he might not laugh outright.

"Love on Sherry's part, as I expected," was his silent soliloquy, "and he's tried to rush matters while I was out, and has got his change. Good! Sherry's a good fellow, and his recent lesson will make a man of him, and I'd like to see him and Fay come together. But it is useless for him to get in a hurry. Fay isn't nobody's fool, and she'll rap him one for every advance he makes until she gets ready for him; then, it would be just like her to pop the question herself."

And, pretty Fay saw that she had cut and the cut had been received, and the next moment she was sorry for it. But she was too proud to show it in either word or action—too proud to own that she would say—admired him.

And thus the evening passed away, and the clock upon the mantel chimed twelve ere Evans proposed that they retire, which they finally did.

Sherry was given a neatly furnished bedroom adjoining Charley's, and the bed had so much temptation for him, that it was the next morning before he awoke, to hear Charley pounding at his door, commanding him to tumble out for breakfast.

Which he did, and after making a careful toilet descended to the little dining room, where Fay had the repeat waiting. And a grand little repeat it was, Sherry thought, when he set about appeasing his appetite.

The morning was very close and sultry, and the young hostess was prettily attired in a light, airy costume, with slippers upon her small feet, and a bunch of fresh-blown roses at her throat, which made her look sweet enough to eat, Sherry thought, as he took alternate glances at her and the food upon his plate.

He was pleasant in his address to her, but she

instantly perceived that he was more reserved than before she had given him that merciless stab. And how was she to let him know how sorry she was, without compromising herself in his estimation?

After breakfast he and Evans lounged around in the parlor for a couple of hours, smoking; then Evans went out around the neighborhood to see how the land lay.

Shortly after, Fay came into the parlor, with a wide-rimmed straw hat set jauntily upon her head, the very picture of a very pretty, modern Maud Muller.

"Do you play croquet, Mr. Raynor?" she asked. "Oh! it's ever so nice; and we have such a nice little ground."

"I don't know B from broomstick about it, but I trust I won't make a bad pupil," Sherry replied, rising and donning his hat. "If you will accept of me, I will be happy to learn."

"Oh! of course; come this way," and she led the way into a back yard, inclosed with a white picket fence, and bordered with beds of blooming, fragrant flowers. In the center a sizeable croquet ground was staked off, and the balls, mallets, and wickets all ready for use. And under Fay's tutelage, Sherry soon learned so that he could play a very fair game. After they had become tired of playing, Sherry offered her his arm, and they went within doors, where it was a trifle cooler.

"I don't want you to be offended at what I said last night, Mr. Raynor," Fay said, looking frankly up into his face.

"I only said it for fun, not thinking you would resent it."

"You meant it enough at the time," he replied, carelessly turning over the leaves of a book.

She came and laid a hand upon his arm, and then for the first time he saw that tears were standing in her eyes.

"I didn't mean what I said, Mr. Raynor—indeed I didn't. I only said it to tease you. Won't you forgive me?"

"You are freely forgiven, Miss Fay," he said, heartily, offering her his hand, which she accepted with an eagerness that he observed with a thrill; "and we will remain friends. Maybe it will not always be as it is now."

"Maybe not always," she replied, in a low tone. Just then Evans came rushing in from the street, flushed, panting and excited.

"Our goose is cooked!" he cried, grimly, locking the hall door; "the detectives have tracked us to our lair, and now we cannot escape them!"

Death-Face could scarcely repress a yell of excitement as he read the notice, which, as he supposed, a servant had, with other rubbish, pitched from an upper window, to save the trouble of carrying it down stairs.

"Amy is confined here, and this is a mad-house, or rather a prison for women who are in people's way," he said, pausing, and surveying the structure with a critical glance. "In the third story, and probably guarded zealously. Dr. Heidle—ah! I have it. That was the big old reprobate I saw in conversation with Seymour, undoubtedly. I can find his place of business in the directory. I must look into this case."

He went immediately to the room in Mulberry street, but neither Dock Raymond nor Fred Funk were there. Nor did they put in an appearance until late in the evening, by which time Conroy's patience was well taxed. Raymond was the first to come, Fred soon following.

"Hello, you in so early, boss? What's happened?" demanded Dock, hunting up his pipe and tobacco, in order that he might have a comfortable smoke.

"A good deal has happened," replied Death-Face, more exultant in his tone than he usually manifested.

"I have found where Miss Elwood is confined."

"And I have found where Miss Celia Orwick is quartered!" announced Fooley Fred, entering at this moment.

"The deuce you have! Where?" demanded Dock, springing to his feet.

"In Wooster street. But, let's hear the captain's portion first. Mine'll keep."

Accordingly, Death-Face related all about his interview with Seymour, and about the notes that had been showered down upon him.

Then Fred related what he had learned in the saloon—about the interview between St. Cloud and Messrs. Durg and Curley, finishing up with a description of the house on Wooster street where Celia was confined.

"Well, we have got two cases on hand from which we are not liable to realize much!" Dock remarked, puffing at his meerschaum, meditatively. "But I've got another one demanding immediate attention, which will fetch in a few thousand. This Raynor boy, who has been leading such a fast life for a month past, has, it turns out, been very coolly circulating two thousand dollars' worth of counterfeit money in this city, as revealed by Faro Phil's death, the other day. Now from all I can pick up I believe he is innocent."

"I was going to speak about that, but it slipped my mind. I saw the death confession here in this evening paper. Now, I was after Faro Phil the same night of his arrest, and saw him gull the boy on the boat. And they escaped together; but I am positive the boy gave me ten per cent. for that 'queer' for I'll wager he didn't have ten dollars, at the time. Maybe he slid off with the bundle, believing it to be genuine money, and this angering Faro Phil, the scoundrel resolved to strike him a last blow, which he has effectively done."

"You're sound, there. The boy's prospects are ruined in New York. All of Pinkerton's men are on

the watch for him, and they are making up a reward purse in Wall street."

"And has he dodged them?"

"Successfully, so far. He has Charley Evans, the fellow who was once a 'shadow' on Pinkerton's force, for a comrade, and Evans knows the ropes, you bet! He was discharged, you will remember on suspicion of being concerned in a swindling machine on lower Broadway, but his innocence was proven so far that he was offered a job back on the force, which he refused."

"Well, the show is a little better for Raynor, then, but they cannot long escape the vigilance of fifty experts."

"Not unless we help them. I saw Samuel Raynor to-day, and believing in his nephew's innocence, he offers to give us five thousand dollars out of his own pocket, if we can get the boy safe out of New York, westward bound."

"He does? George, that is a good offer, but it is hardly the thing for us to accept," said Death-Face, slowly.

"Not with the belief that the boy was guilty in 'shoving' those 'blossoms,' no. But I believe he did it unknowingly, for the reason that Evans was constantly with him, and I am well satisfied of his honesty."

"I hardly believe him guilty, myself, but we would be risking our necks in trying to smuggle him off. But, anyhow, we will give the matter the best of our consideration. And in the mean time, we have got work before us in the behalf of mercy, which appeals stronger than money. You shall manage Miss Orwick's rescue, while I will take Fred and myself to cope with Dr. Heidle and Seymour."

So, at length, the three detectives formed and discussed schemes which they must put into working, in order to release from unjust confinement the two imprisoned girls of different stations in life.

CHAPTER XIV.

DEATH-FACE'S LITTLE GAME.

For two hours or more the three detectives discussed plans and re-discussed them, until each finally found one suiting their case. Fred Funk was to negotiate with Dr. Heidle for the imprisonment of an elderly maiden aunt, who was to be no other than Death-Face in disguise, for, once inside the private mad-house, with the proper tools concealed about his person, the great detective had no doubt but that he could work his passage out without much difficulty.

Of course it was within his power to make an open raid upon the institution with aid from the metropolitan police, but then there were ten chances to one that there would not be a female prisoner in the place, so handy are these pseudo doctors at smuggling and quieting.

Therefore, it was thought best to release the girls first, and arrest the doctor afterward, as the testimony of the prisoners and himself, Death-Face calculated, would be all that was needed to procure conviction and a long sentence.

So, having decided upon their plans, Fred set out at once for Doctor Heidle's place, where Death-Face had learned that he lived, by consulting the directory of names and residences.

But something else occurred before he reached his destination. Ere he had got out of Mulberry street, he met a hurrying, cloak-enveloped figure, which he at once recognized, even though the darkness was intense.

"Miss Nelly Orwick!" he said, blocking her passage. "What are you doing so far from home on this wet night?"

The little woman burst into sobs as she saw and recognized the young detective, who of late had called upon her several times.

"Oh! Mr. Funk, I have no home any longer. I am homeless and shelterless, for my landlord has turned me out on the streets, and sold all my furniture and clothing, except what I have on my person."

"The low-lived brute!" Fred involuntarily exclaimed, drawing her under his commodious umbrella, as if he had the right to protect her. "You owed him considerable, eh?"

"Only six dollars, and I could have soon paid it, if he would have treated me half-way decent," with a fresh burst of tears.

"Well, that is bad, but don't cry, Miss Nelly, for you have a friend in me; and you will let me care for you, will you not, until we find and restore to you your sister?"

"Oh, sir, but that will never be, I fear," replied she, sorrowfully. "Oh! would to heaven that I knew what has become of my poor sister—my own Celia!"

"We know just what, Miss Nelly. I was lucky enough to overhear a conversation, which completely unraveled the mystery. Your sister went to meet St. Cloud in the park, and he made a murderous assault upon her, and left her for dead. But two gardeners had witnessed the scene, and rushed into the arbor where she lay, and were successful in bringing her back to life. So they took her to their home on Wooster street, where she still remains confined. So we have set Dock Raymond after her, and as he thinks the world of her—as I do of her pretty sister here—he will be likely to put in his best efforts to rescue her."

"Oh! Heaven be praised!" exclaimed grateful Nelly. "I feel I have still something to live for."

"Miss Nelly, I assume the right of guardian and protector, for the present, until I can make other arrangements. I will take you to an old aunt's of mine, and she will give you a good home and accommodations."

"Oh, sir, you are very kind," Nelly said, tears again springing into her eyes, and her little form

trembling with emotion. "I know not how I can ever repay you."

Fred did not answer for a few moments, but when he did, he stopped in under an awning and drew her closely to him, kissing her passionately upon the forehead and lips.

"Nelly, darling, there is one way you can repay me and make me the happiest man alive, and that is by returning my kiss, and saying you will be mine forever, until death do us part," he whispered, all his love finding expression in his voice.

And Nelly trembled in his firm embrace, and remained silent for a few moments—moments that seemed hours to Fred, waiting for his answer. At last she spoke.

"Before answering your question, Mr. Funk," she said, "I feel in duty bound to tell you something that but few know. Instead of a maiden, you would be taking to your heart a widow."

"A widow!" he echoed in astonishment.

"Yes, a widow; I was married when I was sixteen to a Mr. Gorman. He died a month after we were wedded, and I again assumed my maiden name."

"And how old are you now?"

"Fair nineteen," with a little laugh.

"And old enough to have a second husband. Yes, I will take you, darling, even though you cannot give me your whole heart's love."

"Which I can," came back the whispered response, as their lips met in a long passionate kiss, "for I have loved you, Fred, since we first met. Oh! my prince, this is the happiest moment of my young life."

And he held her closely to his breast and their hearts beat with all the exultant ecstasy of a newborn love.

But duty aroused him, and urged him onward. Instead of taking her to the home of his aunt, he took her to the Fifth Avenue, and they registered as Mr. and Mrs. Fred Funk, after which she was shown to a suite of rooms, which he had taken, while, feeling twice the man he had earlier in the evening, he repaired to Dr. Heidle's establishment in Baxter street.

On ringing the bell, the doctor opened the door in person, this immense corporeity making a formidable barricade.

"Dr. Heidle, I believe?" Fred said, staring hard at the old villain.

"The same," was the reply. "Will you walk in, sir?"

"Well, yes, as I have a little private business to transact with you," Fred accepted, stepping inside. The doctor locked the door, and led the way in through a couple of parlors, magnificently furnished, where the young detective was surprised to find a dozen well-dressed men, young and old, and as many scantily-clad females, some gambling, and the rest variously engaged; and Fred mentally pronounced this a "ranch."

Fred soon found himself closeted with the pseudo M. D., in his office upon an upper floor, and he proceeded to make known his business.

"My name is Farbell—Christian Farbell," he said, in his rapid, off-hand way. "I have an elderly aunt, who stands between me and a great fortune. I want her removed, and hearing of your ability in that respect, I concluded to pay you a visit, and see what you could do for me."

"Ah! yes." The doctor rubbed his hands in anticipation of a good fee. "Do you wish the old lady summarily removed, or merely quieted for a time?"

"Merely quieted. I've been told that you have a private asylum on Third avenue, where you can hold people in duance for a short length of time."

"Oh! certainly—for a life-time, if desirable."

"I want the old lady shut up for only about two weeks," replied Fred; "then I contemplate taking her out West, and feeding her to the Indians."

"Very well. I will keep her safely for you, for the consideration of one hundred and fifty dollars, and deliver her to any part of the city at the expiration of two weeks."

"Agreed. I will bring her to your asylum to-morrow evening. She imagines she suffers a thousand and one ailments, and I can represent you to be a great cure-all."

Then Fred counted out the required fee, and signified his readiness to be shown out.

After quitting the doctor's, he hurried back to the Mulberry street tenement, and found Dock and an elderly lady, whom he at once pronounced to be Death-Face in disguise, to be the only occupants.

"Too thin!" Fred exclaimed, decisively. "You'll not pass inspection in that tog, captain."

"Think not? Well, I am afraid not, myself. I got the costume at Weisserts, but it didn't quite suit me."

"Go to Shannon, Miller & Crane's, if you want to get fixed up scrumptious. They're the boss, as I look at it."

"Pretty fair, yes, but I know of a little dress-maker, out near the suburbs, who once fixed Jack Cramer out in fine style for a masquerade, after he had furnished the trappings. I think I shall patronize her."

Death-Face set out, the following morning, for the residence of the little dressmaker in question. He first, however, visited several Broadway stores, and purchased dresses and underclothing, so far as was necessary, and false hair, a bonnet, and several little articles he was likely to need.

So by the time he reached George street, it was noon, or past. He found the residence, an unpretentious little two-story brick, without trouble, and rung the bell. While waiting for an answer to the summons, he made a little discovery.

Two men were lounging at the corner, a short dis-

tance away, and were evidently watching some house in the vicinity. And these men he recognized to be two of Allan Pinkerton's 'shadow' detectives, named Day and Hall. What were they doing away out here, so far from the heart of the city where they usually held out?

This was the problem for solution.

"What's wanted?" demanded a feminine voice, and glancing upward whence came the challenge, Death-Face caught a glimpse of a pair of eyes and a dark face, through the shutters.

"Does Miss Fay Evans reside here?" the detective asked; then came an inkling of what had brought Pinkerton's men here. Perhaps Sherry and Charley Evans had taken refuge in this house, and the Shadows suspected it?

"Yes, Miss Evans resides here. What do you want?" was the reply.

"I was referred to you by Jack Cramer, who pronounced you an expert in rigging one up for a masquerade."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I wish to secure your services, immediately, and will give you your price. I have all the fixings with me. Will you accept?"

"I will come down," was the answer, and a few moments later the door was opened, and the detective ushered into the parlor by pretty Fay.

Sherry and Charley, who were both lounging there, sprang to their feet, the latter drawing a revolver, as he beheld the great detective.

"Death-Face!" he gasped, growing white, but pulling back the hammer of his weapon. "What do you want here?"

"Nothing of you, young man, nor your companion, so put up your revolver," said Conroy, coolly. "My business is with you, Miss Evans. I wish you to disguise me as a woman, as far as is possible. I am about to play a bold game, and in order to do it, I must be made to resemble an elderly lady. Your art brought into play, I believe I can deceive the world."

"Then, you really do not mean harm to my brother and his friend, sir?" Fay asked, a slight tremor in her voice, and her face pale and eyes dilated. "You promise—"

"There is nothing to promise, my dear young lady. Evans and Raynor are not on my list, and I shall offer them no molestation. In fact, I am interested in Raynor's case in another direction, and shall use my efforts to screen him from justice, as I do not believe him guilty."

Satisfied that all was right, Death-Face received a warm welcome from all three, and at his solicitation, Sherry related how he had come into possession of the counterfeit money, and how he had recklessly squandered it.

Death-Face, in turn, related what he had learned from Samuel Raynor, of Nevada, and of his desire to get Sherry out of the city. It was wonderful news to the young man, and something of his old spirit returned.

Evans also related all about their escape, and how Pinkerton's men had skillfully hunted them down.

"I'll put them off scent," Death-Face assured, with a smile, "and you must lie shady until I get ready to run you out of the city; for it will not be safe for you here, again, very soon."

It was nearly dark ere Fay had fixed the detective up to her satisfaction, but when the job was completed, all declared that it would take more than a scrutiny to distinguish him from an old lady of sixty years.

Everything was perfect, from the wig of gray hair and costume, to the painted face, and goggled eyes. And, well satisfied with the job, Death-Face pressed a liberal sum of money upon Fay, after which he took his departure, promising to send the detectives on a false scent, and also to call again, as soon as he completed the business to which he was now devoting his whole personal attention.

CHAPTER XV.

DEATH-FACE PLAYS WOMAN—AN OBSTACLE.

DEATH-FACE left the house of the Evanses and crossed over to the opposite side of the street, aiming for the corner where Pinkerton's two detectives were lounging. As he had expected, they instantly blockaded his path, decisively.

"See here!" said the one named Day, sternly; "what does all this masquerade mean? Do you think to escape us in any such flimsy disguise?"

"Reckon I've nothing to fear from you," replied Death-Face, in his own natural voice. "You don't know the sort of tree you're barking up!"

"By Heaven! It is Death-Face! Just as I told ye, Tony!" exclaimed Hall. "What are you doing in this disguise, pard?" and the 'Shadow' put out his hand warmly.

"Oh, I'm off on a lark," Conroy replied, indifferently. "Got track of a little game, and am going to attempt to bag it."

"So? Well, I wish you success."

"Thanks; but what are you doing way off up here?"

"Well, according to all calculations, we're watching the ranch from which you just issued."

"The deuce you are!" Death-Face exclaimed, in apparent astonishment. "Watching what—that pretty little hazel-eyed dressmaker?"

"No, not particularly her, but for a couple of coons she's harboring—Raynor and Evans, the counterfeit-shovers. We got upon their trail last night, but they succeeded in giving us the fling, and came down here. We knew Evans used to live in this locality, and so came down to investigate, and by luck saw him enter yonder house, only about an hour in advance of you."

Death-Face gave utterance to a sarcastic laugh.

"You came too late," he said, having a "blinder" ready for the occasion, "for your game has fled. After knocking you down last night, Raynor and Evans both came here and remained through the night, starting in the morning for Brooklyn, accompanied by Charley Evans's brother, who came back as soon as he had seen them aboard the ferry-boat. I saw them on Fulton street, and it was Evans's brother you saw re-enter the house before I came. I'll bet you'll not see your game in this direction again for a month."

Then the detective turned and tripped down the street, leaving the two 'shadows' to reflect upon what he had said.

And presently he had the satisfaction of seeing them quit their post, and come away, looking rather grim and disappointed over their ill-luck.

"It was a whoppin' big lie!" muttered Death-Face, with a grim smile, "but, 'we won't count dot one,' as old Van Winkle says. All's fair, in this kind of war, except murder; and I'm bound Pinkerton's men shan't eucher me out of my game. Now, then, back to headquarters, and then to Doctor Heidle's asylum. Wonder how I shall like it—in with so many females!"

There was time for debate on this question, as he got into the waiting cab at the next corner and rode back toward Mulberry street. But other thoughts occupied his attention.

He thought of sweet Amy Elwood, and how much he loved her—and would she not think even more of him if he succeeded in rescuing her from her confinement, within that prison to which her scheming cousin had consigned her? Would not he then dare to tell her what he had never dared to tell her heretofore—that he loved her—and ask her for that small white hand that many a man would have periled his neck to possess—the hand back of which was a beautiful woman, and a great fortune?

On arriving at the tenement, he found Fred Funk in waiting for him, and they both drove at once to the Third avenue retreat, wherein Death-Face was to enter in his clever disguise. He had procured all the tools and things necessary for his purpose, and concealed them under his clothing, and had little fear but what he could effect an easy escape, if he were given time, and allowed the use of his hands.

Doctor Heidle received them in the grand parlor, which Amy Elwood had entered, ahead of them, a month before, and bade them be seated, while he turned on a full head of gaslight from the magnificent chandelier.

"This is the learned medical professor, Doctor Heidle, I suppose?" Foxy Fred said, with a bow.

"The same, young man," replied the old wretch, with a patronizing rub of his soft white hands. "What is there I can do for you?"

"I have a case here, sir, requiring a little attention, and thought you the proper authority to consult. My dear aunt Priscilla is very much run down in health; needs a little strengthening medicine, you know, and a proper course of diet to fetch her around ship-shape once more."

"Ah! yes; an easy job to straighten her up, though it is plain to see that she is very much debilitated. Will you leave her in my care, sir? My boarding facilities are the most complete, and I can have her under my immediate charge."

"Will you be content to remain here for a few weeks, aunty?" asked Fred, turning to the disguised detective.

At first aunty demurred considerably, but on being assured that it was to be for her constitutional benefit, she acquiesced, and after giving instructions to the doctor, that she should be confined with the other patients, Fred took his departure; but it was an understanding between him, Death-Face and Dock Raymond, that they were all to meet at Evans's house in George street, as soon as their separate tasks were completed.

After Fred's departure Aunt Priscilla was taken up into the third story by way of the elevator, shown into the prison room, and the door locked behind her.

At first she made violent protestations, and screamed loudly for help, when she learned that she was in a mad-house—truly a creditable piece of acting for Death-Face.

And none of the females suspected that he was other than what he appeared, and they all clustered around him, which was amusing in the greatest degree, though he dared not divulge his identity. As he had expected, he found Amy Elwood among the inmates, and she was among the foremost to offer consolation. Her month of confinement had not worn upon her much, for the roses were still in her cheeks, and she was as piquant and pretty as ever. At least so thought Death-Face, as he gazed lovingly upon her. She was his love-ideal, and it made his heart beat faster to have her near him—she on whom he had secretly centered his affections, long ago.

After the women had nearly talked him out of his senses, and he had learned all about how the establishment was conducted, he took advantage of a couch and laid down—not to sleep, but to think, and feeling decidedly uncomfortable in his feminine drapery. He was hardly decided what to do—whether to attempt to escape that night, or wait longer—and perhaps fare worse. The night was black and rainy, and the show for escaping was favorable.

At last he decided that the attempt should be made, and rising to a sitting position, he motioned for Amy Elwood, who came and seated herself by his side.

"What is it, aunty?" she asked, sweetly; "cannot you get any rest?"

"I don't need any at present, Miss Elwood," the detective replied, in his own voice—"sh! don't scream, or the jig's up, as the boys say. I am a

friend in disguise, who has come to get you out of this den. I am Death-Face, the detective!"

Amy gave a little gasp of surprise. She could scarcely credit her sense of hearing, so sudden was this disclosure.

"Then you are not a woman?" she articulated, faintly, hardly believing that he was speaking the truth. It seemed incredible, almost, that man could be so effectually disguised.

"Nary a bit of woman about me," Miss Elwood. "I have been looking for you a month, and it was merely by chance that I came into possession of some of the notes that you or some one else set adrift over the pavement below."

"Ah! then they were not without result, after all? I have thrown them out every day for a month. At last, thank Heaven, they have been answered—but in so strange a way!"

"I probably look strange enough in this rig—so strange that you fail to recognize me, Miss Elwood?"

"Indeed, I do, though the outlines of your face seem familiar."

"And yet, Miss Amy, in this disguise, and under these most inauspicious circumstances, I wish to tell you that I dearly love you, and ask you to be my own little wife. As soon as you see me out of this disguise you must give me an answer, and a favorable one, too."

A deep blush mounted to Amy's cheeks. Who was this strange man, who was so bold in his proposal of love? She could think of no one that was in the detective business among her acquaintances—not one.

"I am surprised, sir!" she said, a trifle haughtily, and rising from her seat.

"Well, I'll not press you now, believing you will reconsider. Please inform your companions of my identity, that they may not be alarmed. Are we safe from intrusion for the night?"

"Oh, yes. No one ever enters here after seven in the evening."

Amy then informed the other inmates of the great detective's presence, and no little wonderment did the announcement cause. They all flocked around him and bored him with questions until he was nearly distracted, and he afterward wondered how he ever withstood the siege.

He managed, however, to make a critical examination of the apartment and its modes of egress and ingress. He found that the easiest and safest way to escape would be out of the front windows, to the pavement below. But the windows were heavily barred and fastened into the casing with long screws.

"Does Dr. Heidle remain here all night, Miss Elwood?" he asked, peering out into the damp dark night through the aperture in the glass which Amy had made.

"No; he has another place somewhere; he never comes here only when there is a patient to imprison. There are two persons who remain overnight, a Creole woman and a man guard, who is stationed in the elevator room."

"Good! then our escape promises to be easy. I'll lower you down. How many of you have homes to go to when you are free?"

Eleven out of the crowd, including Amy Elwood, were provided for; the others—also including Amy—Death-Face resolved to take to Fay Evans's home, until other arrangements could be made.

He proceeded to remove the iron bars by aid of tools he had fetched along, and after a couple hours of noiseless labor, he had them off and the entire window out, which opened up an avenue of escape. But it was nearly thirty feet from the pavement, a distance which must be descended by aid of a rope-ladder, which he had brought along.

After everything was in readiness and the women were prepared, he glanced at his watch and found that they had yet a couple of hours to wait before it would be safe to descend to the street; so he resolved to undisguise himself, which he did by tearing off the gray wig from his head, rubbing the paint from his face, and ridding himself of his feminine attire, done by touching a concealed spring in the back of his dress; when he stood before the astonished girls, once more in his true garb.

"Harry—Mr. Conroy!" exclaimed Amy, springing forward with a glad little cry, and the brave detective made bold to take her in his arms, as she did not resist.

"Amy, my darling," he whispered, softly, imprinting a kiss upon her rosy lips, "you are now mine, by right of rescue. Do you care anything for me, my little Amy?"

"Oh! Harry," she replied, in a low tone, that the others might not hear, "how can you ask that? I have loved you ever since you so fearlessly rescued me from danger, when my horses ran away."

"And yet, you gave me no for answer a while ago, when I told you that I loved you, and asked you to be mine."

"Oh! yes, but I didn't know it was you, under that disguise," she replied, with a shy glance up into his eyes. "If I had, I might have taken time to consider before I answered. And to think that you are Death-Face, and I knew nothing of it!"

"Well, now, what is to be my answer? Can you marry me? Do you love me well enough for such a step?"

"I more than love you, and will be your wife whenever you wish, for I shall never feel safe again without a strong, brave protector like you. Clarence Seymour will be my life-long enemy."

"Only in thought, dear, for ere long there will be work for him to do on Blackwell's Island, or at Sing Sing. Besides being a villain in countless other ways, I am satisfied that he is a ringleader among a gang of counterfeiters."

The two hours dragged slowly by it seemed, but at last the clock in a neighboring steeple tolled the hour of two.

It was raining very hard, and by peering out at the window, Death-Face saw the watchman rush swiftly by, bent on getting under cover.

"Now is our time," he said, fastening one end of his rope-ladder within the room, and dropping the other out of the window. "I will go first, and fetch three or four hacks around onto the next street, and see that the coast is clear. Then I will return, and assist you all to the ground."

Saying which, he let himself cautiously out of the third story window, and glided down the ladder. And when he reached the pavement, he found himself confronted by a stalwart policeman.

CHAPTER XVI.

AND FAY LOVED HIM—DOCK TO THE FRONT.

At Fay's home, all remained quiet after the departure of Death-Face, and it was with feelings of gratitude that the two youths saw Pinkerton's "shadows" turn away from their post, and hurry toward the heart of the city.

Twenty thousand dollars for twenty years, at ten per cent. interest—phew! you're the master of sixty thousand dollars, principal and interest, or, rather, of thirty, if this sister of yours ever comes in for a share."

"Yes, and you can wager your life I will freeze to this fortune!" Sherry said, resolutely. "I need but one lesson of the kind I have recently passed through to teach me at least common sense. I long to see this uncle of mine, for I feel that I shall like him. He is my only known relative, except Leo."

"Leo? that's your sister?"

"Yes, and one whom I have not seen in eight years. I was past eleven when I went to work for the baker, and she was ten. But I have a picture of her taken before she left the Broadway photograph gallery, and I hope by its aid Death-Face can find her."

"What will you do with all your wealth—go West, I dare say?"

"Probably, for New York is too hot for me. I'll let uncle invest my thirty thousand in government bonds, and that will make it safe, and yield me an income big enough for my support. Yes, I shall go West, for I have always had a yearning to see the great mountain, prairie, and mining regions."

"Well, our best wishes go with you, then, and accept our congratulations on your bountiful good luck."

Thus the conversation ran, until, finally, Evans decided to take a stroll around the neighborhood, through the wet, murky night, to see if the shadow detectives had really vanished.

Sherry concluded not to accompany him, fearing lest they might encounter danger, which was most undesirable, under the circumstances. Besides, he had much rather remain with Fay.

Fay! whom he thought he loved more and more every time she came into his presence. She was sitting by the open casement, now, gazing thoughtfully out into the street upon a pool of collected water, on which the gas-lamp threw a flare of light, watching the rain-drops drop upon the glassy surface; listening to their reverberations as they pattered on the pane—wondering how it was all going to end. Sherry was going off, he had said. Could she bear to have him go, and know she was never likely to see him again? Ah! no; the tears came into her eyes as the unwelcome thoughts rushed upon her, and a lonely feeling entered her heart, made the more so, perhaps, by the loneliness of the sobbing, murky night. No, she could not let him go, now that she had learned so thoroughly the lesson of love—the sweet, ecstatic lesson that produces such a wild, ungovernable desire of the heart—an inexpressible sensation, hard to describe. She could not let him go—it would rob her life of all its pleasures; yet twice she had repulsed him, and was he the one to sue now for favor?

Ah, perhaps not; perhaps he would go away without ever speaking of his love again.

And the longer she thought upon the subject, the faster came the tears, and with her head bowed down upon the window-sill she wept quietly, but oh! so bitterly.

Sherry did not know that she was crying, at first, but presently discovered the fact, and went over to her side, wonderingly. He had no suspicion of the cause of her grief, and was alarmed.

"What is the matter, Miss Evans; are you ill?" he asked, laying one hand upon her shoulder.

His touch thrilled her, and caused her to raise her tearful eyes to his, and make an attempt to smile.

"No, I am not ill, sir; I was only thinking of something, and you know thoughts sometimes create sadness in the heart."

"Very truly spoken, indeed. But, I pray you will banish those thoughts, and cheer up. I never like to see a person cry—it makes me feel in a tearful way, myself."

"Well, with a faint laugh, "then I will postpone it, until some other time; though I have cause to feel very sad."

"Which I am sorry for," he said, drawing a chair near, and sitting down. "I hope no blunder of mine has been the cause of your unhappiness, Miss Evans?"

"No blunder, no, but—"

"Ah! then there is a but in the case, eh, Fay?" he said, bending closer, and drawing one of her hands within his; "is it because—because I am going away?"

She made no audible answer, save it was by more tears that filled her eyes, as she again bowed her head upon the casement. Yet Sherry interpreted her silence to be an affirmative reply, in the absence of words.

"Don't cry, please," he said, putting his arm around her, and drawing her against his shoulder. "You wouldn't care—"

"Oh! don't say so, Sherry—Mr. Raynor; you know well enough I would," she replied, nestling closer to him. "I would be sorry if you were to go, without taking me."

"Taking you? But, you would not go."

"Wouldn't I? If you don't care for my company, you hadn't better ask me, then."

"Fay!" Sherry's voice was now earnest, and thrilling, "are you trifling with me? Somehow, these women are a sad puzzle to me."

"No, Mr. Raynor, I am not trifling with you. I know I have committed myself, but—"

"But, what, darling?"

"But I love you," she softly whispered, "and it would kill me to have you go away and leave me!"

"And, I love you, also, my treasure!" he replied, drawing her close to his breast. "But, will your brother—?"

"No need to fear objection from him, for he approves of my choice."

"And then you will become my darling little bride?"

"Yes, my prince, and I hope that day may not be long distant, when you shall call me yours in truth."

And then, lip met lip in a fond, clinging kiss—the betrothal caress that bound two loving hearts together.

In the meantime, Dock Raymond was in search of Celia Orwick.

He found the house on Wooster street, where Durg and Curley had stated her to be, without difficulty, but the next thing was to effect an entrance.

It was a three-story brick, and it was a puzzle to Dock how he was ever to get into it; but not long, for his subtle brain soon conceived a plan, which he hastened to put into execution.

Toward the close of the day that witnessed Death-Face's *entree* into Heidle's asylum, a well-dressed, bewildered individual, evidently middle aged, rung the bell on the door of the house in Wooster street, and then waited for an answer to the summons.

He carried a small-sized leather-bound book under his arm, and looked like a common business man. The ring was answered by an elderly servant, evidently of Irish descent, who nearly filled the doorway with her broad proportions.

"An', faith, an' what would yez be havin'?" she asked, staring hard at the man outside. "Be yez wantin' to see ther master?"

"Oh! no, Biddy," was the pleasant reply. "I am the gas-man; don't you remember me?"

"Shure, an' are yez the gas-mon? I thought as he wore Galway sluggins, sir?"

"So I did, the last time, Biddy; but I changed the style of my beard."

"An' a right sensible lookin' mon yez be. Come in, if it's the meter yez wants ter see, but wipe your brogans on the mat, furstly."

The gas-man complied with this request, and was shown in through the hallway to the cellar, where he made an examination of the meter, writing the result down in his book.

"Biddy," he said, upon coming up out of the cellar, "there is a great leak of gas through the house, somewhere, since last quarter. You have not burnt seventy million feet I know!"

"Oh, the good saints save us, no, Faith an' how much is it, yez sez?"

"Over seventy million feet, actual measurement."

"Ouch! howly murder, and the master sez if I burnt more than a thousan' he'd skin me alive."

"I would, too, Biddy, for wasting so much. Why, woman, your master is ruined. The gas bill will be over two hundred and ten thousand dollars."

"Och! the saints preserve us!" exclaimed the horrified servant, holding up her hands in righteous horror. "What shall I do—what shall I do?"

"Oh! I can fix that all right, Biddy, providing you'll assist me a little."

"Bedad, I'll wurruk the ends o' my fingers off, yer honer."

"Well, then, my plan is this. There is a young woman imprisoned in this house whom I wish to rescue. Go bring her to me, ready for the street, and I'll make your gas bill only two dollars, and give you a V to buy a dress with, in the bargain. Will you do it?"

"Howly saints! but, sir, the young leddy isn't here no longer. I tuk pity on the poor crater, an' let her out wid her dead babe in her arrums, an' sent her to Pat Maloney's."

"Ha! is that so? then, Bridget, you're a 'solid woman.' Here's a V for you, and now give me a note to this Pat Maloney to surrender the girl to me, for I am a detective in search of her."

"A detective!" cried Biddy, in wonderment. "Then yez be no gas-mon, at all!"

"Nary a gas-man, my beauty."

"Och! w'at fer devil's own imps the men are! An' yez want the leddy?"

"Certainly."

"Well, I'm glad the poor crater hes got friends, I am. Shure she's swatter than gin wid sugar, an' twice as purty as a shamrock blossom. Pat Maloney lives in Wather strate—No. —; jest tell him Biddy O'Shay sent yez fer the leddy, an' it'll be all right."

"All right, Biddy. When you get married let me know, and I'll come and fling my heel at yer wedding!" replied the disguised Dock Raymond as he bowed himself out.

"Ha! ha! that gas bill nearly frightened the poor fool out of her wits," he laughed, as he trudged back

toward his lodgings. "Now, then, I must get on my other togs, and go and find Celia. Poor girl. She has seen trouble enough."

He repaired to the tenement in Mulberry street, first, and found Fooley Fred and Samuel Raynor there.

"What luck?" Fred demanded.

"Oh! boss luck! Will have'r all safe and sound inside of an hour."

"That's good! Fetch her around to George street, No. —, and I'll take her sister there. Mr. Raynor, here, will also accompany me."

Then, after a short conversation, Dock went to his room, on a neighboring street, and spent a couple of hours in arranging his toilet to his satisfaction, after which he set out for Pat Maloney's, on Water street.

Reaching his destination, he found it to be a dirty, grimy sort of hovel, characteristic of the locality. The sounds of drunken revelry in the adjoining dwellings, jarred discordantly on the night.

"My name is Dock Raymond. I was directed here by Biddy O'Shay, in search of Celia Orwick," Dock said, as a grim, stubble-bearded face was presented through a window.

Then the door was opened, and he was admitted into an humble apartment, occupied by the owner of the bearded face, and an old crone, evidently his wife. The room was scantily furnished, and ill-smelling.

"So ye cum fer the gal, did yez?" queried Pat Maloney. "Well, ye ken have her, for I've no worruk, begorra, an' it's mighty hard to get a crust, nowadays, Celia, gurl, be yez awake?"

In answer to the call, a pale, fragile-looking girl came out of an adjoining room, and as she caught sight of Dock Raymond, she sprang forward with a low, glad cry, and was folded in the young detective's arms.

"Oh! Dock!" she exclaimed, "is it really you?"

"Yes, Cele, you dear girl, I have come for you, after a month of search. You are mine now—I know all—everything. But, come; let us go. I will take you to a better place than this."

Dock gave Maloney a liberal fee for his kindness, then purchasing some wraps at a neighboring shop, he and Celia set forth into the night.

A hack was soon hailed, and inside of an hour they were safely set down in George street, before Evans's house, where they found Charley, Sherry, Fred, Nelly Orwick and Fay in waiting for them.

CHAPTER XVII.

A HAPPY REUNION—CONCLUSION.

DEATH-FACE was somewhat startled, but not in the least alarmed, as he beheld the policeman, and felt a heavy hand laid upon his shoulder.

"Now I've got you!" the officer said, with a little chuckle. "Didn't expect to find cops this wet night, did you? Come along!"

"Not if I know myself," Death-Face said, coolly. "Better find out who you are arresting first. See here," and he pulled the officer toward the nearest lamp, "I am Death-Face, the detective. Here is my proof," and he displayed a handsome gold badge, on which his name was engraved; "and now, instead of arresting me, you must give me a little aid. Do you know the character of that house?"

"No. Respectable, ain't it?"

"In a virtuous sense, yes; but in other words, it is a private mad-house."

"The devil, you say?"

"Yes, a private mad-house, with fifteen or sixteen girls in it—girls and women—who are no more insane than you or I."

"Phew! how do you know this?"

"By notes thrown from the window, first, and by visiting the place in disguise, last."

"George! that is a discovery! What were you going to do, just now?"

"Was going for carriages, and then going to get the girls out of the den."

"In the upper story, eh?"

"Yes. Can I depend upon you for assistance?"

"Certainly."

"I shall call upon you to make the arrest of this old cuss—Heidle his name is—when I get around to it. You procure four hacks, and fetch them around the corner, while I get out the prisoners."

Then the officer hurried off on his errand, while Death-Face reascended the rope ladder, and crawled back into the chamber, where the females were huddled together.

"Oh, what is the matter?" demanded Amy Elwood and Annie Boyce, together. "We saw a man below, and feared for danger."

"No need of that, my dears," was Conroy's reply with a smile. "That was a policeman, and he will help us off. He has now gone for carriages, and we must get out—"

At this moment heavy footsteps were heard in the entry, near the elevator-way, and a key was thrust in the lock of the prison room.

"Oh! 'tis Mike, the jailer, coming!" whispered Amy, turning white. "He has heard noise, and is coming to investigate!"

"Oh! what shall we do?" gasped Annie Boyce. "He will kill us."

"Just keep quiet!" exclaimed Death-Face, coolly, "and I'll fix him."

He glided across the room and got behind the door, and as the jailer entered, sprang upon him, and dealt him a terrible blow on the forehead. Down he went like a log, when Death-Face securely bound and gagged him.

"There! one difficulty less!" he said, with a grim laugh. "Now, ladies, if you will get upon my back,

one at a time, and hold fast, I will get you out of here. Amy, dear, you may try first, and set the rest an example."

It was rather an undignified position for a young lady, but as there was no help for it, Amy cheerfully obeyed.

And Death-Face succeeded in placing her safely upon the pavement.

Annie Boyce came next, and then the others, one at a time, until all were safely out of their prison, thanks be to Death-Face.

Without tarrying, they hurried around the first corner, and there found Coggston, the policeman, waiting with four hacks, ready for departure.

Death-face put Amy and Annie Boyce into one cab with three of the others who had no particular homes, and then mounted with the driver, and gave orders to drive to number — George street, leaving Coggston to see the remaining prisoners to their respective homes.

The ride to George street was soon accomplished, and Death-Face and his five companions were made welcome into the little home of the Evanses, which already had been the scene of a joyous reunion between Celia and Nelly Orwick.

Thus was the little circle as complete as it could be made.

But a new sensation was there, when, with a yell, Sherry sprang up, rushed over to the side of Annie Boyce, and threw his arms about her neck, giving her a resounding kiss.

"Leo, my sister, as I live!" he cried, in delight. "See here, Uncle Sam, this is she! I twig her jib, superfine."

"Sherry! Sherry! can this possibly be you?" returned the astonished girl. "I never should have known you."

"But I knew you, bet your life on that!" he cried, with enthusiasm. "See here," and he drew a picture from his pocket; "this is you, and you're this. I got it at the gallery where you worked. Hey, Death-Face, ain't this boss?"

"A very enjoyable discovery, indeed, I should say," replied Conroy, "but may I inquire, Miss Raynor, how you came in the mad-house?"

"That is easily explained, sir," replied Leo, in answer to his request. "I was placed there two years ago. As some of you may be acquainted with my history, I will say, that after leaving the gallery, I went to keep house for a young man named Ned St. Cloud, upon Twentieth street, in this city."

"While in his employ, I came into possession of an important secret, belonging to him and a man by the name of Seymour."

"Clarence Seymour, was it?" demanded Amy, eagerly.

"Yes, that was the name. I was going to notify the proper authorities, but suspecting my knowledge, St. Cloud had me put in Heidle's place, where for two years I have remained."

"And this secret? What was it about?" asked Death-Face, eagerly.

"It was about their running a counterfeiting business, and a plot to flood the country with spurious money. I found out where their 'mint' was located, and will tell you!"

And then she named a certain place within the city limits, the exact locality of which we must withhold from the reader. Suffice to say that it was in a place where it might have remained a lifetime, undiscovered, but for the information of Leo Raynor.

The following day was a busy one with Death-Face and Co., for they had their hands full in making arrests, which were necessary, now that the fruit was ripe and fit for plucking.

First of all, Dr. Heidle was arrested and delivered up to the authorities; and next came St. Cloud and Seymour, on various charges.

Then Death-Face and his two bowers, accompanied by a posse of police, made a raid upon the counterfeit den of the Ring, only succeeding in capturing the dies, presses, etc., and one man, who was on duty.

This work safely accomplished, there was, one evening, a great wedding at the little house in George street, Sherry and Fay, Dock and Celia, Death-Face and Amy, and Fred and Nelly, being the happy couples who linked their fates together.

A week later, old Samuel Raynor started back for Virginia City, Nevada, and with him went Sherry and his darling Fay, and Charley Evans and Leo, Sherry's sister, who has since then wedded.

And out there in Mineral-land they all still live, as happy in their love as the day is long.

Heidle, St. Cloud, and Seymour, received early trials for their crimes, and severe sentences. Heidle went to Sing Sing for twenty years, and well he deserved a longer sentence.

St. Cloud and Seymour were put to work side by side in Sing Sing—each for a term of ten years, only to serve a new term at the end of that time on new indictments.

And if you want any detective business done, dear reader, you cannot do better than call upon the "Big Three"—Conroy, Raymond and Funk, who still hold forth in the metropolis, experts in their profession, and devoted husbands to those dear girls whom they took for better, not for worse.

One of Death-Face's great successes was the cleaning out of Queen Mab's 27th street establishment, but report says she has again started up on Broadway, in full blast.

And thus we take leave of them all, with our best wishes forever.

THE END.

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